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JAMES ANGAS JOHNSON

1. Name

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# Memoir

OF

# GEORGE SWAN FOWLER

## CHRISTIAN MERCHANT.

Not slothful in business
Fervent in spirit
Serving the Lord
—*Holy Scripture*

By JOHN PRICE

Adelaide
E. S. WIGG & SON, Rundle Street
1897

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# In Remembrance

OF

A VALUED FRIENDSHIP OF MORE THAN THIRTY YEARS' DURATION

WITH

MR. GEORGE SWAN FOWLER

THIS VOLUME IS INSCRIBED

WITH SENTIMENTS OF ESTEEM TO HIS WIDOW, AND HER

SONS AND DAUGHTERS IN SOUTH AUSTRALIA,

ENGLAND, AND EASTERN BENGAL

JOHN PRICE

Evans 27 Mar. 1944

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# Memoir.

## CHAPTER I.

### BIRTH AND PARENTAGE.

GEORGE SWAN FOWLER was born at Cellardyke, in the County of Fife, Scotland, on March 9, 1839. In a family of nine, consisting of three sons and six daughters, he was the youngest child. The neighbourhood in which they were born had been the home of the family for some generations. Anstruther and Cellardyke would seem to a stranger to be not only adjoining townships, but almost one continuous town with its suburbs. But though so contiguous they had their distinct rights and privileges, and were not altogether free from their mutual jealousies lest one should encroach upon the prerogatives of the other. But yet they had their common interests and relationships. About a hundred and twenty years ago Captain David Fowler was a man of some standing in Anstruther, but his son James Fowler is more

identified with Cellardyke. Captain David Fowler was the grandfather, and James Fowler the father of the subject of this sketch. Mr. James Fowler's life is deserving of a more lengthened notice than can be given to it in this memoir. He was born in Anstruther in 1794. In his early manhood he was partner in the firm of Swan and Fowler, but on the dissolution of that firm he removed from Anstruther proper and commenced business as grocer and general merchant in Cellardyke. These places together have a population at the present time of about 7,000. We learn from the local papers of a former time how highly Mr. James Fowler came to be regarded in the neighbourhood in which he lived. *The Fife Herald* of January, 1855, reports a circumstance which enables the editor to write at some length upon the position of mark and influence to which Mr. Fowler had attained in the district. Cellardyke is situated on the shore of the Firth of Forth, and the inhabitants are engaged very largely in the fishing business and in curing and preparing fish for the market. An attempt was made by some of the magnates of Dunbar to get control of a large extent of the sea extending to six miles of coast and six miles seaward. This plan, if it had succeeded, would have closed the fishing ground entirely against the fishermen of Cellardyke, and would have been ruinous to the fishing industry of the harbour. The action was also interpreted as calculated to result in the complete loss of civil liberty to the fishing population. By the influence which Mr. Fowler was able to bring to bear,

and by the personal energy he exercised, he entirely frustrated the attempt, and the community, with great fervour, met to express their gratitude and to present him with an appropriate testimonial. But what gives chief value at the present time to the newspaper report is the record that is thus preserved of the high esteem in which his character was held between forty and fifty years ago. In presenting the testimonial the chairman said:—"Everyone knows that to the poor and needy he has been a friend, and in the hour of need he has been ever forward with his sympathy, benevolence and liberality to bind up the broken spirit and make the widow's heart to sing for joy." At the time of his death, at the age of seventy-nine, there is a review in the *East of Fife Record* of December 13, 1872, which describes him as a man of business and as a public benefactor, in terms which in some respects seem singularly appropriate to the career of his sons—James, David, and George—in after years in Australia. "In his new sphere—that is, as beginning business in Cellardyke—his natural shrewdness, energy, uprightness, and close application built up and established a business which ultimately was second to none in the locality; while his independent, straightforward and Christian character commanded universal confidence and esteem." In addition to his business engagements he was for a long period Pastor of the Baptist Church at Anstruther, but he ultimately relinquished that position, assisted in the reconstruction of the

church, and accepted the office of deacon. His sermons, many of which are preserved, were expository and very weighty with great doctrines of the Word of God. The esteem in which he was held by the church is very fully expressed in a minute entered in the Church Book at the time of his death:—"Mr. Fowler took an active and energetic part in the formation of the church, and from its formation till his death was one of its most useful members and office-bearers, and its best earthly friend. His uniform kindness of manner, practical wisdom, and wonderful humility endeared him to every member of the church, while his earnest and unassuming piety, his fervent and frequent prayer, his spiritual and profitable conversation, will long live in the memory of all who knew him."

Among the many letters written at the time of his death there is one that is very interesting both because of its sweet utterances and because of the person who wrote it—the venerable Jonathan Watson, of Edinburgh. "So at last your dear father has got the start of me, and has joyfully landed on the eternal shore. I could have gladly joined him in his passage across; for with a meeker, lovelier, dearer friend I could not have set forth. But it is not permitted us to go home in pairs; each must go through the divided river of death, alone."

Mrs. Fowler had preceded her husband by six years, having fallen asleep in Jesus in 1866. She was born in 1797, married in 1820, she and her husband were baptized

in 1825—Mr. Fowler on August 25, and Mrs. Fowler on October 12—and for forty-six years she was spared to be a helpmeet for such a servant of the Lord. Truly, "The memory of the just is blessed."

## CHAPTER II.

### EARLY LIFE.

THERE is not much information to hand respecting the young life of GEORGE SWAN FOWLER. The influences under which he was nurtured can be readily imagined from the brief sketch that has been given above of the character and lives of his parents. When he was old enough to take his place in school he became a boarder in the burgh school of Kirkcaldy, some twenty miles from Anstruther. His business capabilities must have developed at an early age, as we find him taken into partnership with his father on November 17, 1858, when he was but nineteen years of age. Very soon after that a circumstance occurred which changed the whole tenor of his life—his presence was needed in Australia. His partnership in the Cellardyke business was terminated on December 7, 1859. He took his passage in the steamship "Indus," and left Southampton in her on Saturday the 12th of May, 1860. The journal that he kept of the voyage is marked by the keenness of observation which characterized him through life. There was nothing particularly eventful in the voyage except that it was his first. It took him fifty-one days and a half to make the passage, and he landed at Glenelg on

July the 4th. That would be considered long in these days of large steamers and fast travelling. But steamers' capacities and mail arrangements at that time differed in various respects from those of our own day. The "Indus" was a vessel of only 450 horsepower; beside which Mr. Fowler did not save the week by crossing the continent of Europe, but he went round by sea through the Bay of Biscay and by Gibraltar. As the Suez Canal was not then completed all passengers and cargo had to be landed at Alexandria, for what was called the overland route; and they proceeded by rail through Cairo to Suez, where they were again shipped on the Red Sea for Colombo and Australia. Then the ocean mail steamers did not come on to Glenelg or Port Adelaide, but a small steamer met the mail at Kangaroo Island and received all that was intended for South Australia. Under these unfavourable circumstances the travelling itself was not inordinately slow in accomplishing the long journey in fifty-one days and a half.

The circumstance which occasioned his coming to Australia was that of a painful family bereavement, namely, the death of his brother James. Messrs. David and James Fowler had commenced business in Adelaide as grocers in 1854. James died in 1859, and it became necessary that his place should be filled in the business. George had already represented the business in Great Britain, but David being left alone required his presence and help in Adelaide. Soon after his arrival the two brothers entered

into partnership. They worked together, and we have incidentally some glimpses of the condition of the country by the habit in which Mr. George Fowler indulged of jotting down in his journal circumstances which transpired on the journeys he took, and the circumstances in which he was placed. One journey to Wallaroo by way of Port Arthur, when Yorke's Peninsula was in a very primitive state, shows something of the adventures that belonged to travelling in those days. In January, 1864, Mr. George Fowler returned to Scotland for the purpose of getting married. The lady who became his wife was Miss Lamb, of Coldingham, in the County of Berwick. They were married by the Rev. Jonathan Watson. After spending a little while in Scotland they joined the "True Briton" in London, leaving that city on the 28th of September, and reached Melbourne on the 21st of December. They had intended remaining there for a little while, but hearing that Mr. David Fowler had arranged to leave London on the 15th of January, 1865, they decided to go on to Adelaide without delay. They engaged berths by the "Wonga Wonga," which sailed the next day, and on the Saturday they reached Adelaide, where the warmest welcome awaited them, and were glad to settle down in their home.

## CHAPTER III.

### THE FIRM OF D. AND J. FOWLER.

THE expansion of the business known as that of D. and J. Fowler has constituted an important feature in the history of South Australia. When it began in 1854 it was a grocery business, and not in a large way. The death of Mr. James Fowler was a severe blow, but the arrival of the younger brother in 1860 amply supplied any lack that may have been occasioned by that occurrence. In 1865 the retail business was disposed of, and the whole energies of the firm were devoted to the wholesale department. Large premises were secured in King William Street. Mr. George Fowler took entire control in Adelaide, and about the same time Mr. David established a buying office in London. The business speedily extended, coming to include the indenting and importing of almost all kinds of merchandise. This led to the establishment of the firm at Port Adelaide. In 1873 a large store on Maclaren's Wharf was opened; in 1875 an additional floor-area of 6,000 square feet was added to the original 7,500, and in 1877 another 13,000. So rapid was the increase that ultimately the firm purchased a site facing the New Docks, upon which they erected the splendid pile of buildings

they now occupy. It extends from Santo Parade right through to St. Vincent Street, having a frontage of 150 feet with a depth of 244, providing a storage capacity for 40,000 tons of merchandise, with complete arrangements for handling the enormous quantities of goods which pass in and out daily, and enabling them to have all their goods under one roof.

The premises in Adelaide were also found to be too limited for the increasing business, and it was decided to rebuild them on a larger scale. The warehouse at the back is four stories high, 150 feet deep, and 80 feet wide, having a floorage of about 45,000 square feet. The protective policy of the country led the firm to develop manufacturing industries of considerable magnitude in confectionery, fruit preserving, jam, pickles and various condiments. The stock and plant of the London Condiment Company, at Maylands, were purchased; also, Harford's Confectionery Works, in Mill Street, Adelaide; and Hanton's Jam Factory, at Fullarton. A factory for fruit preserving on a large scale has also been erected at Nuriootpa, sixty miles north-east of Adelaide. All these have been fitted with the recent appliances for carrying on the multifarious operations. An extensive kerosene store capable of holding 50,000 cases of kerosene has been erected at Port Adelaide. The firm carry on, also, a large shipping business, acting as agents for several lines of mercantile traders. They have houses at Adelaide, Port Adelaide, London, Fremantle, and Broken Hill. This

description very imperfectly indicates the gigantic proportions of the business, which having begun in such a small way, has been developing and expanding by the energy and judicious management of the two brothers up to 1881. From that time on it has been controlled by Mr. George S. Fowler with the assistance of his partners, Mr. C. G. Terry (who died in 1892), Mr. R. J. Phillips, Mr J. H. Phillips, Mr. G. C. Knight, Mr. James Fowler (nephew), and during the last few years of his life, his two sons, Mr. James R. Fowler and Mr. David Fowler. Both as to principle and prosperity the firm stands in the front rank of the commercial houses which have been established in the Southern Hemisphere, and it is perhaps the largest private business in Australia. In addition to the lines of business that have been referred to there are two others that are worthy of special notice.

The first of these is one that does not belong to the firm as such, but to the personal and private enterprise of Mr. Geo. S. Fowler. He was in England when the McArthur-Forrest process of gold-saving came into prominence. He was out boating one day with two friends when the cyanide process became the matter of conversation between them. It was at the time when the patent rights of the invention were being extended to Africa, and he was then and there urged to take the matter up, so as to become the medium of introducing it into Australia. With his usual discretion and integrity he refused to lend his name to an enterprise until he could satisfy himself respecting its

genuine efficiency and good faith. Finding that it was worth examining into he made a change in his plans with a view to that end. Instead of returning to Australia through America, as he had intended, he decided to spend some time in Africa that he might thoroughly study the process in its working. His examination of the question practically in Southern Africa convinced his keen intellect and practical discernment that the invention would work a perfect revolution in gold mining in Australia. He at once consented to join the Gold Recovery Syndicate, and to give his name and influence to the promotion of the project in these colonies. Its efficiency was soon proved. Mines which had been worked for years without satisfactory results were changed into profitable undertakings. The difficulty often had been, not in finding gold-bearing stone, but in extracting the gold. In many instances there were enormous heaps of "tailings" that were regarded as mere dirt. In their condition, and so far as any of the precious metal could be obtained from them by any methods that had been tried, they had proved absolutely valueless. But when the Gold Recovery Company obtained the working of them, sometimes by purchase, and sometimes by the payment of a royalty, they proved to be a mine of wealth, yielding gold to the value of tens of thousands of pounds by means of the separation of the precious metal from the previously stubborn rubbish. There has been a good deal of litigation over the patents, as affecting different parts of the world—not

over the efficacy of the process, but as to the rights of the company to the protection which a patent secures. The money expended on all sides in these law suits is not much short of a quarter of a million. In some cases the verdict has been in favour of the company, but in the Transvaal it has been hostile, that, however, does not affect the value of the discovery. In a very high sense Mr. Fowler has been a benefactor to Australia in devoting himself so largely to the introduction and employment of so valuable an invention. His son, Mr. J. R. Fowler, has succeeded in this, as in many other lines, to his father's work.

The second enterprise of a special kind is the one in connection with the Adelaide Milling Company. When he was last in London he entered into negotiations with the Official Receiver for the purchase of the whole of the assets of this company, comprising eleven mills in different parts of the colony, together with all their plant and stock-in-trade. The purchase was finally concluded in conjunction with a friend for the sum of £82,500. Mr. Fowler considered this as one of his most profitable transactions, though it entailed on him personally a great addition to his own cares, to have an entirely new business in operation in so many different districts, and to find markets for such an extensive output.

Few people, with any adequate knowledge of the world, pay much attention to anonymous attacks that may be made against any gentleman, with a view of prejudicing

his election, when he is a candidate for a seat in Parliament. It is not surprising that an employer of labour upon a large scale, as Mr. George Fowler was, should be subject at such a time to insinuations respecting his relations to people in his employ. These tactics of depreciation were attempted during one of his electioneering contests; but the numerous staff in connection with the firm spontaneously issued a manifesto repudiating any aspersions upon him as to his treatment of employés. Upon various occasions also they united in testimonials of loyalty and esteem when he has was about leaving the colony for a time, and in the year 1887, which was the year of the fiftieth celebration of his birthday, they presented him with a life-size painting of himself in oils, accompanied with a most gratifying address. The length of service on the part of many of the workers would be a sufficient proof of the happy feeling between an employer and his workpeople; and an inquiry in the London office, or in Adelaide, Port Adelaide, or Glen Osmond would satisfy any mind of his happy relations with the great body of workers with whom in different grades, he was associated.

The sketch that has thus been given indicates a career that bears not only upon the fortunes of a single person, or of a firm, but upon the well-being of the community at large. Enterprise and character like Mr. Fowler's, supply employment for multitudes, strengthen a growing country like that of South Australia, and establish confidence in

the integrity and honour of those who occupy high places in social life and in the commercial world.

This, perhaps, will be as fitting a place as any in this volume for a reference to an act of beneficence, which, though not a proceeding of the firm of D. & J. Fowler, was yet one in which three partners of the firm had part. The relation of Mr. David Fowler and Mr. Geo. S. Fowler to Cellardyke, their native place, has always been of the happiest description. In September, 1883, there was in Cellardyke a day of great rejoicing, mingled with much regret. For some time there had been great need of a suitable place for meetings of various descriptions, such as a coffee and reading room for the use of the fishermen and others when on shore during stormy weather and at other times. The Young Men's Christian Association also needed a building large enough to hold their increasing numbers. Communication was opened up with Mr. David Fowler, and an old friend and school-fellow of his, named Mr. Williamson, who was member for the burghs, and who had been in business as a merchant for years in Liverpool. These two gentlemen made an offer to the Town Council to take down the old Town Hall and build a new and much larger edifice to include a hall, café, reading and amusement rooms, &c., on the condition that it would thereafter be maintained by the town. The offer was promptly and gratefully accepted. Mr. George Swan Fowler offered to contribute generously toward the fur-

nishings. The valuable building, with all that it contained, was handed over to the town amid great rejoicings. The cost amounted altogether to about £5,000. As has been hinted already, there was one matter of profound regret amongst them—Mr. David Fowler was not amongst them, he had been removed by death. His son, Mr. James Fowler, was present. Mr. Geo. S. Fowler was absent, also, through business engagements. The feelings of gratitude were very deep to the Fowler family, which was spoken of as having been a great stay to the town for several generations. As a mark of appreciation and of honour the freedom of the burgh was publicly presented to Mr. Williamson, Mr. Geo. Swan Fowler, and Mr. James Fowler. The signed and stamped document which conveys this privilege and honour to Mr. George Swan Fowler speaks of the Council as having created, admitted, and received him as a Burgess and Freeman of the said Burgh "in consideration of the many services rendered by him to the commuuity, as evinced by the spontaneous gifts and substantial aid given on various occasions by him towards promoting the comfort and well-being of the inhabitants of his native place, and as also shown by the generous and kindly manner in which he has supplemented, in various ways, the gift of the new Town Hall and offices presented by his late brother, Mr. David Fowler, and Mr. Stephen Williamson."

## CHAPTER IV.

### POLITICAL CAREER.

MR. FOWLER was slow to seek a place for himself in Parliament, but he was by no means indifferent either to the character of our legislators or the measures which they introduced. Indeed, he received signal expressions of thanks from many eminent citizens for his courage and wisdom in interposing upon one occasion in an election when it was by no means pleasant to do so. In 1878, however, a vacancy occurred in the electoral district of East Adelaide, and he signified his intention of contesting the seat. He was returned at the top of the poll, having the late Sir J. C. Bray as his colleague. He became at once distinguished in the House by his commercial knowledge and statesmanlike views. He was a pronounced Freetrader, and he never concealed his convictions. He was appointed by the Governor in November, 1880, along with the Hon. Charles Mann, to represent the colony in a Conference of Delegates from Victoria, New South Wales, and South Australia, to be held in Melbourne, on the question of the free passage of duty-paying goods across the respective borders of those three colonies, and other matters of intercolonial interest. It was felt

that he had with dignity and ability represented this colony. There was one matter, however, which created a considerable amount of agitation upon the return of our delegates. Under peculiar circumstances they had committed our Parliament to a change in the tariff in reducing the difference of taxation between manufactured and unmanufactured tobacco. This was perhaps an unconstitutional act, but Parliament ratified the action of their two representatives, and the decision then arrived at with respect to the article in question has not been disturbed in its differential principle to the present time.

On the retirement of the Hon. Charles Mann from the post of Treasurer, Mr. Fowler was invited by Sir William Morgan to join his Ministry in that capacity. Having consented, he received his appointment from the Governor on the 10th of March, 1881. This necessitated a re-election, and he was again returned. He suffered, however, a breakdown of health at that crisis, and his medical advisers felt that it was imperative that he should take a prolonged rest. To the great regret of the colony at large he was obliged to resign office almost as soon as he had entered upon it, but not before he had given proof of his natural ability to deal advantageously with the finances of the colony. He immediately departed for England. In addition to the question of his own health there was another reason that weighed with him—his brother was in a precarious condition of health. Mr. David Fowler lingered on for some months and died in London in

October, 1881. He was a man who was held in universal esteem. Mr. George Fowler felt his death keenly. When writing just after the event he says :—"I am very glad I came home to enjoy so much of his company as I have done. It seems a sad void to me now. My wisest counsellor, my best and truest friend, as well as my only brother—gone."

He remained in England until September, 1884, and then again embarked for Adelaide, and arrived here in October. Immediately on his return he was entertained at a breakfast got up by the Baptist denomination in the Victoria Hall, to give a hearty welcome to him and Mrs. Fowler. A few personal friends were also present by invitation. Among the many speeches of warm congratulation was one by the Hon. D. Murray, M.L.C., who expressed the feelings of very many on public grounds, when he said that he was "pleased to see Mr. Fowler back in the colony. He would be glad to see him once more in the commercial and political world, as well as in religious circles. He had come to the colony and found it in a depressed state, but if human agency could in any way alter the prospects of the colony Mr. Fowler was the right man to assist in doing it." He did not, however, again seek Parliamentary honours until 1892. He then received influentially signed requisitions from the districts of Barossa and of East Adelaide. Barossa would have been the easier district to contest, but with his characteristic courage he decided to stick to his old constituency.

During the eleven years that had elapsed since his former election conditions had altered. The Labour party had formed a rigid organization. Employers of labour were regarded with disfavour, and members of trades unions were expected to vote for nominees who were themselves working men. On their side it had come to be a fight of labour against the employers of labour. Beside which Mr. Fowler's views were not in accordance with the convictions of the Temperance party as to the particular legislation required in regulating the sale of drink. The result was, that though the polling in his favour was very high, he was defeated. From that time he retired entirely from Parliamentary contests, and thereby the councils of the nation suffered a great loss.

## CHAPTER V.

### PRACTICAL RELIGION.

ONE of the chief charms of nature is its variety. We perceive that variety is an ordinance of God and a very important contribution to our own enjoyment. It is not always remembered that this is one of the natural laws which also prevail in the spiritual world. There are some whose preconceived notions lead them to conclude that true religion must take the same form in every life. Doubtless there is a centre to which all lines converge, and from which all radiate, but in studying the lives of men in their religious manifestations it is no reflection upon one type that it differs from that of others, any more than it is a reflection to say that one flower differs from another that grows out of the same soil and forms part of the same landscape. It is no reflection upon the spiritual life, either of Mr. Fowler or of other men, to say that the form which his religion took was characterized by his own individuality, and did not conform to what we see in some others. This very variety is not without its recommendations, it is scriptural, is true to real life, and reveals God's glory more fully than any mere uniformity could possibly accomplish.

As we have seen in this narrative, the home of Mr. Fowler's childhood and youth was one in which a religious training would be inevitable. He was the child of godly parents and of Baptists. He was in his 21st year when he made a profession of Christ by baptism in the Anstruther Church; and from that time throughout he was consistent to the profession he made both as a Christian and a Baptist. But there were some ordinary forms in which his religion did not prominently express itself. He was not in the habit, for example, of speaking freely about his own Christian experience. He did not seem to be one who would be moved by that which is simply sensational in religious matters. Neither did he seem to concern himself very deeply about the various doctrinal distinctions which agitate the theological world. By this it is not meant that he held loosely the great fundamental truths of our religion. In these matters he was one with the denomination to which he had joined himself. His doctrinal position was—That he believed in the Son of God as his Saviour; in the blood of Christ as the means of his redemption; in the Spirit of God as the power of renewal; and in God as his Father; and he looked forward with joyful expectation to the heavenly inheritance. These, it is true, are all doctrines, but they are hardly the ground of controversial theology as between the evangelical denominations. Then, his mind does not seem to have been agitated by the various metaphysical and philosophical speculations which lie at the root of modern scepticism;

but yet, upon one important occasion, his wise and honest dealing with one of his own sons, who was entangled in the meshes of doubt, gave more effectual help than many dissertations would have effected. Upon being consulted on certain mental perplexities his reply was substantially to the following effect:—"These difficulties have not come in my way, and I am not the one who can help you; but I strongly advise you to effectually settle the matter. Do not cover up the questions. I would rather see you an honest sceptic than a professing Christian, if you are not a true-hearted believer." The courage of heart and liberality of spirit displayed in such an answer did more than any argument would have done to convince an inquiring young man of the fearlessness of true faith and confidence as to the result of honest investigation. Before his own death he had his full reward in having that son in full association and sympathy with himself in his various enterprises in the cause of Christ, succeeding him as treasurer and ultimately as vice-president of the Baptist Union.

If the supposition is correct that his religion did not run in the lines either of the emotional or the speculative, it is very certain that it did, however, very largely take the forms of warm sympathy and of practical help. And as his sympathy and help were afforded, not according to the rules of conduct laid down by others, but according to his own judgment, and his habit of discriminating between things that differ, it may seem to some that the following

incident can hardly be accepted as a proof of his being a follower of the Lord Jesus Christ. It is known to most people that the late Mr. Charles Bradlaugh professed himself to be an atheist. He was elected by the borough of Northampton in England as their representative to Parliament. Christians and non-Christians had joined in voting for him on the broad ground of his political convictions, his general principles, and his honesty of purpose. When he presented himself at the bar of the House he refused to take the customary oath; as it appeared to hold him to religious professions that he disavowed. The Government of the day refused to admit him without the oath. Upon being sent back his constituency elected him a second time. He then consented to go through the form of taking the oath, but it was then decided that he should not be permitted to take the oath, inasmuch as his atheistical position was that of disbelief of the religious facts which the terms of the oath presupposed. Three times in succession he was elected triumphantly by the same constituency, with increasing majorities and enthusiasm. What was the part for advanced Christians to take in such a mixed condition of things as that? It was a difficult position for many. The battle which had been fought for a long time by free churchmen as opposed to those who held to religious bondage, was that the distinctions, honours, and privileges of the State, with all its institutions, should be open to all good citizens, irrespective of church connections or creeds. Various battles had been

won and advances made under this banner. Catholic emancipation, the admission of Jews into Parliament, and the admission of Nonconformists to the Oxford and Cambridge Universities, had taken place. The great body of Nonconformist politicians in Great Britain at that juncture were warm in their condemnation of the policy that excluded Mr. Bradlaugh. Mr. Fowler was in England at the time of the excitement that raged on the subject. He was indignant at the treatment that Mr. Bradlaugh received. His indignation did not exhaust itself in the luxury of mere feeling, but he wrote him a letter of sympathy, and enclosed a cheque for £50 to help him in the payment of his election expenses. He did not know him personally, and had never seen him, but it was characteristic of his manner of life that his sympathy should take a practical form.

For the Baptist denomination in South Australia it was a very fortunate thing that he was largely associated in Christian enterprise and effort with a leader whom he could fully trust—the Rev. S. Mead. Just at the time of his first arrival in Adelaide a few gentlemen, and among them Mr. George Fife Angas, were taking steps to get a minister from England to commence a Baptist Church in South Adelaide. As the result of their efforts, Mr. Mead, fresh from college, arrived in 1861, and immediately commenced his ministerial work. A little band of twenty-five Christians was formed into a Baptist Church by the Rev. George Stonehouse, with Mr. Mead as pastor. Messrs.

David and George Fowler were in that number. The church afterwards became known as the Flinders Street Baptist Church. This church from the beginning of its history was noted for the earnestness and liberality of its spirit and its schemes. The pastor was distinguished for his untiring labours, and he was soon surrounded by a band of men who were eminent for their wisdom and their Christian character. One feature of that church was that young men were attracted in considerable numbers, and they found in Mr. Mead a pastor whose first aim was to win them for Christ. Young men, who were themselves earnest Christians, found full scope for their own active powers, and great inspiration in the leadership of their pastor. This was a congenial atmosphere for Mr. George Fowler. Mr. Mead and Mr. Fowler were very different men, but Mr. Fowler learnt from what he then saw that he could always put trust in the industry, integrity, sincerity, and whole-hearted devotedness of his pastor; and these qualities were dear to Mr. Fowler's heart. There commenced at once, not only a friendship, but (along with others) also a co-operation in the Christian work which very largely decided the course of events for the Baptist Church in this colony. The Baptist denomination in South Australia has been singularly fortunate in the aid which has been rendered to its institutions by intelligent and influential laymen. They have served upon committees, they have accepted official duties, they have guided its affairs by their council, and they have contributed largely of

their means. Among those who have been most helpful in all those respects has been Mr. G. S. Fowler. To understand the value of his services it is needful to give a partial glance at the history of the denomination in South Australia.

The year 1861 completed the first quarter of a century of the history of the colony. During that period the Baptist denomination had made but little progress. There was one important church at Lefevre Terrace, North Adelaide, with its much respected pastor, the Rev. George Stonehouse; and another church in Brougham Place, with Mr. Prince as its minister; and a few others dotted here and there in the country; but there was little strength and no organized means of union as between the churches. But at the time of the establishment of the Flinders Street Baptist Church there began a new spirit of extension and of union. In 1863 a combined meeting was held in the church on Lefevre Terrace to consult as to the possibility of organizing a general union of the churches. The movement was then and there initiated, but some further meetings had to be held before the plans and principles could be fully formulated, but these efforts soon resulted in the formation of the Baptist Union, which, however, for many years was known as the Baptist Association. It is possible that Mr. G. S. Fowler, as a young man at that time, did not take a very leading part in the originating of the scheme. But the Baptist Association has been the point of union and the medium of

extension for the denomination; and it was very largely, though by no means exclusively, the channel through which Mr. Fowler, in all after years, did his part in supplying the country of his adoption with the gospel of Jesus Christ. One of the first aims of the Association was to subscribe funds for the establishment of new churches, and grants in aid of those that were weak, along with the education of young men for the ministry. Mr. Fowler not only became one of the largest annual subscribers to the funds, but also one of the most regular attendants at the committee meetings. He was always ready to give patient attention, through a long sitting, to the questions that came up for consideration. At different times he filled the post of treasurer to the Association, and, in so doing, exercised a powerful influence in establishing a balance between receipts and expenditure. This he accomplished not only by regulating expenditure, but also by promoting system and regularity in contributing, and in stimulating by his liberality the liberality of others. As a rule, with respect to extra donations on his own part, his promises were contingent upon the readiness on the part of others to do their proportion in what was needed for the common good. With this spur many a deficit was met at the close of a financial year, so that the new year might begin with at least a clean sheet. There were depressed times in the history of the colony when the denomination found it difficult to meet some of his large proposals for special funds, but by a little indulgence on

his part in the way of extension of time, and additional help, his offers were invariably successful. The most important of these instances will be mentioned directly. For some years he rendered valuable service as the manager of the Aged Ministers' Fund. He was elected President of the Baptist Union, but failure of health necessitated his absence from the colony, and he felt himself compelled to resign the position.

One instance in which a liberal offer of Mr. Fowler's resulted in the creation of a most valuable institution was that of the formation of what came to be called the Baptist Building Fund. Church debts were, in many cases, found to be a most effectual hindrance to the prosperity of the work. Without giving an adhesion to the charge that is often made as to a church debt being morally wrong, all will admit that it is eminently inconvenient. As to the morality of it, the payment of the interest is simply on a level with that of the payment of rent. But for many reasons it is desirable that a church should have a place which is its own in which to meet. For several years the question of a fund from which money could be lent without interest, except a small per centage just to meet expenses, had been discussed at the annual meetings and in the pages of the magazine. Only an insignificant sum, however, had been received, and there seemed little or no probability of a fund being established for the desired object. In the annual meetings, however, held in September, 1877, Mr. Fowler

voluntarily offered to give £500 towards a Building Fund if an equal amount were raised by the denomination within a year. At the time this offer was gladly accepted, with the hope that the required amount would be subscribed. But when the stipulated time had expired, and the work was far from completed, he was generous enough to grant an extension of time. In 1879 it was still unaccomplished. A mistaken supposition was then raised, and Mr. Fowler wrote thus:—"I regret there should be any misunderstanding about the Building Fund. I had no intention to supplement only the amount raised this year, leaving it optional with the denomination whether they completed the £500 or not, but understood the arrangement of June 23 to be rendering it non-compulsory for the £500 to be raised this year, owing to bad times and the scarcity of money. As, however, the wording of the minute differs from my impression of what took place and my intention, I have no desire to act contrary to them, and *immediately* those having the control of the fund, have a purpose to which to apply the money I will hand over an *amount corresponding to that then raised.* I do not feel inclined to hand over a large sum to be simply placed in the Savings Bank, but will have it available whenever a use is found for it, *or* when the £500 to be raised by the denomination has been fully raised in accordance with the original promise." It is not, however, until the annual meeting in September, 1880 (three years after the offer was made), that we find the

fund completed. In the balance-sheet then presented we find the capital of the fund to be £1,008 4s. 8d.

The fund thus initiated has been found to be most invaluable to the churches, and it is only by the method Mr. Fowler adopted that the result would have been realized. In a sense it became the means of creating a similar fund in another colony. The delegate from the Baptist Association of South Australia to the Baptist Union of New South Wales, in 1884, had a somewhat sensational experience in connection with this matter. He had to give an address at the public meeting on one of the evenings. He had his speech in his mind, but one or two of the gentlemen connected with the Union told him that they were very desirous of seeing a building fund established in New South Wales, and it would be very acceptable if the speaker would give a narrative of the formation of the fund in South Australia. He complied to this extent, that he began his speech in accordance with their wish, but as matters turned out he had no chance of giving a speech on any other subject. After giving substantially the narrative, as stated above, he went on to say that possibly some one in the audience would be disposed to give a challenge to the denomination in New South Wales similar to that which had been referred to. With delightful simplicity he seemed to take it for granted that £500 was too high a figure to ask for in the metropolis of the mother colony, though that was the amount so freely offered in Adelaide, he said, "Shall

I put the figure at £100?" "No, no," was quite a chorus from the occupants of the platform. "Shall I ask for £250, then," he continued. "No," was the reply, "Ask for £500." "Agreed then," said he, "Is there any one in this assembly who will offer £500 on the same condition as Mr. Fowler did?" "I will," said a voice from the body of the church. The meeting was at once electrified. The audience stood and sang the Doxology. Speaking was at an end for a time; pencils and paper for writing out promises were in requisition, and a very respectable portion of the required amount was promised before the speaking was resumed. The Rev. S. Chapman, of Melbourne, followed with a practical address, which preserved the continuity of feeling and aim. And thus Mr. Fowler may be said to have originated the Baptist Building Fund in Sydney as well as in Adelaide.

In the year 1884 many minds were looking forward to what was termed the year of Jubilee. The commencement of the reign of Her Majesty the Queen, and of the foundation of the colony of South Australia, had been sufficiently near together to suggest that the fiftieth year of the two events should be celebrated in the same year. Such churches as the Baptist, Congregational, and Wesleyan, which had commenced Christian worship and the formation of churches at very early periods in the history of the colony, considered that some special effort for the advancement of their respective denominations would be an appropriate jubilee commemoration. The Baptists thought

that nothing could be a more desirable celebration than the extinction of the debts upon the church buildings. Upon investigation it was found that the debts upon the various properties (manses excepted) amounted to £13,300. The loans from the building fund were being repaid by the instalments agreed upon, and these repayments were calculated to reduce the debts in three years by £1,560, leaving the total of the requirements to be by December 31, 1887, £9,740. The Baptist denomination therefore set before them the task of raising in three years the sum of £10,000 over all the ordinary expenses of church work. It was wisely decided, however, that two objects should be aimed at, that of giving immediate relief to the churches that were burdened, and yet of conserving and increasing the building fund so as to reap an immediate and also a permanent advantage. The system adopted and subsequently acted upon was to free all the churches from their mortgages, which would at once relieve them from the payment of interest. Half of the amount to be a free gift and half to be returned by instalments for a course of years, without interest, except one per cent. to meet expenses. Thus, a church that was burdened with a debt of £500, and that had to pay interest at the rate of (say) six per cent. would be placed in the position of having a free gift of £250, would be released from the payment of £30 a year interest, which in the ten years of the system provided for would have amounted to £300 for interest alone, but as an off-set they would have to pay

£25 a year to the Jubilee Building Fund, plus the small amount for expenses, and would then find themselves free from debt, and the denomination would be permanently enriched by a greatly increased fund. It was a grand scheme, but one that required much generous giving and persevering work to bring it about.

Times of depression came and money was scarce, so that when three years had passed away the amount in hand was very small in proportion to what had been contemplated. At the annual meetings held in September, 1887, it was found that a very heavy pull yet remained to those who had given themselves unflinchingly to the work. It was at this crisis that Mr. Fowler came to the rescue. He remarked that for a long time he had not been disposed to help on the Jubilee Fund, as he thought there had been some amount of recklessness in the erection of new churches in the suburbs. He, however, was now willing to give the sum of £500 on condition that £5,000 would thereby be completed by March 31st following, and a like sum if another £5,000 were raised within two years from that time. His splendid offer immediately put new life into the meeting, and discussion then ensued as to the means to be adopted for fulfilling the donor's stipulations. It was in April instead of in March 31st that the first £4,500 was announced as complete, but as usual Mr. Fowler was generous as to time and at once gave his cheque for £500, making the first £5,000 entire. Then remained the still more difficult business of raising the

second half of the large sum within the space of two years. Mr. Fowler did not content himself with pecuniary contributions, but he took a most energetic part in promoting the success of the enterprise. At the annual meetings of 1889 he was one of the most active in pushing on the scheme in various ways. In the report of the week's proceedings we find this memorandum:—"Between twenty and thirty gentlemen accepted the invitation of Mr. and Mrs. G. S. Fowler to meet at Wootton Lea for the purpose of meeting the Rev. S. Chapman and considering the interests of the Jubilee Fund. Distinct promises from £200 downwards were given, making a total of £623, this being in addition to promises made before by several gentlemen present." He presided at a crowded meeting held in the Town Hall during the week, in connection with the Fund. In his address from the chair he is reported to have said, "They had determined to raise the £10,000 during the Jubilee Year, but owing to the depression they had raised only half. Half the debts on the churches had been paid, leaving £5,000 still to be raised. It was not intended that the churches should be entirely relieved. It was arranged that half the amount should be repaid in twenty half-yearly instalments without interest. Thus, £6,000 would go towards a permanent building fund. The churches had already been able to borrow at a lower rate of interest. The other half would be a gift. He hoped that before three months were over their heads the Fund would be completed." After this we find him consenting to act as

a deputation to visit the northern churches on the subject. Along with the Rev. E. J. Henderson he commenced his tour on January 13, 1890, and spent a fortnight in visiting about a dozen churches scattered over the areas, holding meetings in the evenings and making calls during the day. The work accomplished on one of the Sundays is thus described:—"Our experience was—Starting from Mr. Sheriff's at ten to drive three miles to church at Baroota, where the service had to be shortened to permit of time to drive to Telowie, reaching there just in time for service, with no refreshment except such as we could eat in the trap as we drove along. Then after service leaving immediately for Port Pirie, arriving only an hour before the service was due there." As to the results of this visit he writes in *Truth and Progress*, in his report of the trip, that "rust and frost had caused considerable damage in the western districts, and the ability of the people to give was thus crippled. Yet we anticipate that nearly £300 will come." On the 25th of February, 1890, we find an entry of a letter written by him to Mr. C. H. Goode, the treasurer of the Jubilee Fund. "Dear Mr. Goode,—Herewith I hand my cheque of £500 toward Jubilee Fund. This was promised conditionally on the fund being completed by 31st March, but by that date I hope to be in China." The amount was not made up by that date, but it received another stimulus from Mr. Fowler. On his arrival in Sydney, on his way to China and Japan, we find him writing from that city offering to give another sum

of £100, "only on the condition that the total amount is subscribed by April 30th." Then came the final struggle for the amount of £862 to complete the Fund during the month of April." The Baptist Jubilee Bazaar held in the Town Hall during the last week of April rendered good service. Clear of all expenses it left £550, making possible the completion of the work within the specified time. It is difficult to allot to individuals their respective share of praise in an undertaking where many worked so nobly and gave so generously; but the original building fund of £1,000 and the subsequent Jubilee Building Fund of £10,000 would have failed of their realization had it not been for the bountiful donations, the inspiring methods, and the rallying leadership of Mr. G. S. Fowler.

Part of the policy of the Flinders Street Baptist Church has been to promote the formation and growth of churches in the suburbs of Adelaide. This church has pursued an unselfish course in this respect, and has been willing to part with some of its most valuable supporters, when by doing so the work of the Lord could be better furthered than by the neglect of outlying neighbourhoods. A good many members and adherents were residing to the east of Adelaide, and it was thought desirable to make a movement for a Baptist Church in Norwood. In 1867 that desire was accomplished, and Mr. and Mrs. Fowler, then residing in Kensington, became members. Sixteen years after, the church at Glen Osmond, in the immediate neighbourhood of their residence at Wootton Lea, was formed,

and they connected themselves with that little movement and gave it their support. In each case it was to give countenance and aid to a church in its infancy, in Mr. Fowler's own neighbourhood, that he consented to cast in his lot with it. In each instance he identified himself very heartily with the church of which he was at the time a member, and he did not lose touch with the proceedings and interests of either of those from whose immediate membership circumstances removed him. He remained in the church at Norwood until it was freed from its burdensome debt. The Flinders Street Church was always considered by him the central church for the denominational operations, and he bore an important share in all the various enterprises and improvements which characterized the work in that place. He held himself open also to the applications from pastors respecting their forward movements all over the colony. According to his judgment as to the importance of any scheme seeking his help, his responses were liberal. Donations of thirty, fifty or a hundred pounds were by no means infrequent as his answer to projects that met his approval. The present writer could also disclose many instances of generous aid rendered to individual friends in time of need. It would not be allowable to particularize, but one may be permitted to state that those who were thus aided were conscious of two impressions; the first was as to the delicacy with which the kindness was conferred, and the second as to the generous completeness with which the

special need was met. In what he did he was peculiarly courteous, and his generosity was upon a large scale.

The notice of the support he rendered to the great religious institutions with which he was connected would perhaps not be complete if no mention were made of his attitude toward the effort of the Baptist Churches in South Australia to carry the Gospel to the inhabitants of Eastern Bengal. There is, perhaps, no line of Christian service in which the Baptist Churches of South Australia have been so enthusiastic, so united, and so constant for the last thirty years as that of the mission to Faridpur. But this was the one department of the work that Mr. Fowler did not support. The matter is mentioned here not for the purpose of controverting or still less of sustaining his view, but chiefly of making more complete this attempt to represent his relation to the general religious work which was so indebted to him, and with which on the whole he was in such entire accord. He believed in missions to the heathen, but on various accounts he disapproved of the work as undertaken by us. As he sometimes expressed it, our mission work was a luxury we could not afford. Our first duty was to strengthen our own base of operations. Until we could place our own churches in a condition of greater strength and efficiency we were not justified in diverting our means and sympathies to outside objects. In addition to that we were only increasing the responsibility of the heathen by taking to them the Gospel of Jesus Christ when we could not

follow up the work upon a scale that in human probability would bring them in any large numbers into the light and gladness of complete salvation. Oftentimes the matter was discussed on some such grounds between Mr. Fowler and those who supported the Faridpur Mission. The last mentioned proposition is of course based upon eschatological grounds, and can scarcely be argued in the abstract; but it seems to be entirely controverted by the great commission, "Go ye into all the world and preach the Gospel to every creature."

## CHAPTER VI.

### THE CLOSE OF LIFE.

IN July, 1895, Mr. Fowler returned to Adelaide after his last visit to England, but his condition of health was such as to give profound anxiety to all his friends and his medical advisers. Anæmia had entirely reduced him to feebleness, and for a time after his landing it seemed uncertain whether he had not just come home to die. After a time of extreme prostration, however, he was in some measure restored. But the restoration was so incomplete that in the case of most men his remaining term of life would have been a period of inactivity and total retirement from the active duties of life. But the indomitable energy of his nature under his conditions of physical weakness presented a spectacle of rare courage and endurance. The strain upon his strength greatly excited the fears of those whose hearts were bound up in his comfort and life. If it be true, as is sometimes supposed, that strength of will and energy of mind can keep a mortal body in life that would otherwise speedily succumb, Mr. Fowler would be an instance in support of the theory. To

talk with him in that time of weakness, and to listen to his plans for great operations, and to see how he got about to superintend what was going on upon his estate, was an inspiration to any man possessed of moderate physical ability, and a reproof to anyone who was disposed to shelter himself behind ordinary physical infirmities. He had doubtless often to pay the penalty of such intense living. This conflict of a strong mind with a weak body came perhaps to a climax in the resolution he made after some months to visit Western Australia to make personal arrangements about a large tract of land which he possessed between Albany and Perth. The privations connected with such a journey were altogether too great for one in the condition to which he had been reduced, and doubtless it was one of the circumstances that hastened the end. Happily he was spared to return to his home.

In the closing months of his life there seemed a manifest ripening of fitness for the heavenly world. Some of the more forcible and vigorous qualities of his nature became mellowed into a gentleness and tenderness of manner which had always belonged to him, but which did not always find outward expression to the extent that it did toward the close. One scene especially is referred to in another article in this little volume, but which may be a little more lengthily explained in this place. Mr. Fowler had always been marked by his hospitality. It had been a great pleasure to Mrs. Fowler and himself to open their house at Wootton Lea to the ministers of the

Baptist denomination at the time of the annual meetings of the Baptist Union. In later times Mr. J. R. Fowler has adopted the same kind custom at Sunnyside, especially at times when his father has been either ill or absent from the colony. On Tuesday, the 15th of September, 1896, the ministers' meeting was held at Sunnyside. Mr. G. S. Fowler had it greatly upon his heart to address the ministers on a scheme of generous consideration in which he desired to enlist their sympathies. It was a scheme for a testimonial to his old friend the Rev. S. Mead. Mr. Mead had spent 35 years in South Australia as pastor of the Flinders Street Baptist Church, but he now contemplated relinquishing his pastorate and leaving the colony. Another minister, also after thirty years of service was compelled through ill-health to retire from active work, and Mr. Fowler had liberal aims with respect to both of them. His proposal with respect to Mr. Mead was that of giving £500, which should either be the starting of a testimonial to be given in a lump sum, or that the denomination should proceed to raise £5,000 (inclusive of Mr. Fowler's donation), which as a total amount should ultimately go to increase the Aged Ministers' Fund, but that out of the interest of the amount thus raised an annuity should be provided for Mr. Mead. In the semi-humorous description of himself as "a garrulous old man," he proceeded with profound tact and unrestrained generosity of description to express his estimate of the character and services of the friend with whom he had been associated

so long. That may be regarded as Mr. Fowler's last effort. Although it had cost him much, and possibly had exhausted his stock of physical energy, yet it gave him much satisfaction to think that he had been able to accomplish an object upon which his heart had been fully set. He did not rally much after that, but on Thursday, October 1st, 1896, he died very peacefully in the presence of his wife and eldest son, Mr. J. R. Fowler, and Mrs. J. R. Fowler. On the following day he was buried in the cemetery at Mitcham.

Various leading papers contained full descriptions of the funeral, from which, especially the *South Australian Register* and the *Southern Baptist*, the following account is gathered and almost reproduced. The esteem in which the late Mr. George Swan Fowler was held was manifested on Friday afternoon by the vast number of citizens who attended the funeral at Mitcham. The mercantile section of the community, of course, were desirous of paying respect to the deceased merchant prince, and most of the leading business houses of the city were well represented. So was the Baptist denomination, to which Mr. Fowler belonged, and of which he had been so liberal a supporter. Most of those who were afterwards at the grave gathered at Wootton Lea, Mr. Fowler's late residence at Glen Osmond, where the Rev. S. Fairey conducted a short service for the members of the family and the partners in the firm of Messrs. D. & J. Fowler, but many business men who were unable to go to the house waited on the

road and joined the procession when it came along. Some of the late gentleman's employés were in the cortege all the way, but the majority went out in five special tramcars to the Mitcham terminus, and when the procession reached there they formed in front of the hearse and marched to the cemetery. The cortege was a long one, consisting of quite 200 vehicles and extending for a mile in length. Immediately behind the hearse came the deceased gentleman's carriage laden with beautiful wreaths. Then followed the mourning coaches, the occupants of which were:—First coach—Messrs. J. R. Fowler, E. Allnutt, and the Rev. S. Fairey. Second coach—Messrs. James Fowler, G. Fowler Stewart, R. J. Phillips, and J. H. Phillips. Third coach—Messrs. E. V. Joyner and P. Sharp, and the Revs. J. Price and J. G. Raws. Following the mourning coaches were the representatives of the Baptist Union, behind whom came a great many prominent citizens.

The pretty little burial ground reached, the employés lined up on each side of the main entrance, and the hearse and the mourners passed between them to the grave. The coffin was carried from the hearse by Messrs. F. A. Reeves, H. W. Wood, J. H. M. Hawkes, A. Miers, W. Stevenson, H. Ellery, F. Hanton, managers of departments of Messrs. D. & J. Fowler's business, and C. Smith, foreman of the estate at Wootton Lea.

The Rev. S. Fairey, pastor of the Glen Osmond Church, having read a portion of the Scriptures, the Rev. J. Price

delivered the following address:—When I was asked, upon the death of our beloved friend and brother, to give a very short address as one of the oldest of his ministerial friends, the words of the Lord Jesus, which have just been read in our hearing, came forcibly to my mind—the words spoken by the Master to the bereaved and sorrowing sister upon the occasion of the death of the beloved Lazarus —"Though he die yet shall he live." Those are the words in the Revised Version, and they give the assurance of the continuance of life, notwithstanding death. They are words of revelation. You could not independently and apart from the revelation discover them, but they are the words of Him who has brought life and immortality to light through the gospel. They are quite in accordance with our mental intuitions, and, indeed, needed to satisfy the reasonable expectations of our minds. You could not for a moment suppose in the case of our friend and brother, for example, that all that has characterized his life should become at once and for ever extinct. You could not suppose that all the energy, all the tact and wisdom, and all that belonged to his successful career, should have been extinguished as if it were but the flame of a candle. We must believe that it leads on to something still higher and better. I will not attempt to describe the successful career of Mr. Fowler, nor will I venture to depict his character, but I simply wish to impress upon your minds this message, which means more to the Christian than to the natural theologian:—"Though he die yet shall he

live." Those who have recently known Mr. Fowler will have perceived that in the spiritual department, with respect to that which connected him with the unseen world —the relation which the spirit bears to God—there was a preparedness for the change which awaited him. "Though he die yet shall he live." We rejoice that such is the revelation which we receive from our Saviour. As I have but a very few moments, I would turn aside from all that concerns Mr. Fowler's position in the world generally, as a merchant, a citizen, and a politician, and I would just speak, though I am not authorized to do so, for those with whom he was connected in the religious world, and I would say that we feel that in losing him we are losing one who has been a stay and support to the church of Christ and the work of God. By his gifts to the cause of Christ he has been of invaluable service, not only because of what he gave, but because he was the means of stimulating others to come up to his own standard and his own conditions, so that institutions have been formed and benefits have been bestowed to an extent even far beyond the measure of his own gifts. Those who have been more intimately acquainted with him during the past few months must have observed the mellowing of the spirit—how he seemed to be nearing the eternal world; in all his aims making for the promotion of peace, and breathing forth the spirit of earnestness and love. We who are here to-day remember what he has been to us, and we thank God that he has spared so long one who has

been so useful to the community. And now he has been taken from amongst us we know that he has only gone elsewhere to live under better conditions, to fill a larger sphere of service, and to serve the Master in far other circumstances. May the Lord help us to follow his example, and thus we shall glorify the name of Jesus.

The Rev. J. G. Raws then offered prayer on behalf of the bereaved friends, and the Rev. S. Fairey brought the service to a conclusion.

Mrs. George S. Fowler survives her husband, and continues to reside at Wootton Lea. Her sons and daughters are widely separated. Mr. J. R. Fowler, M.A. of Cambridge, lives in the immediate neighbourhood of Wootton Lea at Sunnyside; Mr. David Fowler represents the firm in London; Mrs. E. Allnutt lives at Woodville; and Mrs. Dr. Hope at Pubna, in Eastern Bengal. Mrs. Hope before her marriage was the first lady student to receive a medical diploma at the Adelaide University. Her husband and herself are now employing their energies and skill in caring for the afflicted in that distant province. Though far separated by the calls of life's duty the members of the family are united in reverence and love for the one of whom they have been so sadly bereaved.

The biographical sketch which has been given sets before us a character of very marked significance and individuality. Various aspects of that character are noted

in the valuable papers appended to this memoir, representing both the pulpit and the press. There is a singular unanimity of sentiment pervading those utterances; and that the agreement therein indicated accorded with the popular belief was shown by the extent and variety of what the *Register* termed "A Great Funeral Cortege," as descriptive of the multitude which followed his remains. It consisted of men of every rank, profession, and condition, from the heads of Government, and the highest-placed citizens, to the labouring man. The quality that drew forth this general mark of respect was not chiefly success (though that is not without its significance) but character. It was felt that the life had been distinguished by moral qualities of a high order. The man whose memory they were thus honouring had won his way to their confidence and esteem, and thus they were led to pay their last token of respect. It is a grand thing for this young community that men of moral worth are not rare in the various conditions of life. South Australia has known many citizens of similar moral stamp. They are the true principle of conservation in the midst of much that is calculated to cause anxiety in the politics, the commerce, and the morality of the land. The good is stronger than the evil. While Mr. George Swan Fowler was exceptional in the force and intensity of his life, there are multitudes among us to appreciate all that is excellent in any such life. That mainly is the method, namely through personal effort and influence, in which "the power that makes

for righteousness," which, in Christian thought, means Christ the Lord, is working out the salvation of our race.

THE END.

# APPENDIX.

AMONG the many references to Mr. G. S. Fowler that were made in the pulpits of Adelaide and surrounding places on the Sunday following his death, there were three memorial services that were of special importance, because they were held in the three churches in which Mr. and Mrs. Fowler had, at different times, been members. These were—Glen Osmond Church, of which Mr. Fowler was a member at the time of his death; Norwood, which had special remembrances of his fellowship through the years when the church was struggling with heavy difficulties; and Flinders Street, the church which he had, when he was a young man, helped to establish and to aid in a variety of ways. By special request, the ministers in those churches permitted shorthand notes to be taken, in order that they might be represented ultimately in a memorial volume. In each case certain facts of life and parentage, and certain lines of remark, needed to be identical when the life had to be commented on. The sympathetic reader is, therefore, asked to kindly pardon the repetition as to matters of fact that are found in this volume. In the biographic narrative such facts would necessarily have to be stated, and in the different

sermons they are also worked up in the constitution of the discourse, and could not be eliminated without violence to the structure. The same may be said respecting the other testimonies that are supplied in the papers from various publications that are inserted. Thanks are hereby accorded to the proprietors of the *South Australian Register* for permission to use their leading article; as also to the editors of the *Southern Baptist* for the use of two papers. The editor of the *Baptist Magazine* will please accept apologies as to the use made of his excellent biographical notice without his consent. The occurrence is due to the distance. But it was judged that his past ministerial relations to the church at Anstruther, and his continued personal friendship with Mr. Fowler, would ensure his willingness, under the circumstances, to pardon what would otherwise seem a discourtesy.

## GLEN OSMOND BAPTIST CHURCH.

### SERMON BY REV. S. FAIREY.

A SERVICE in memory of the late Mr. G. S. Fowler was held at the Glen Osmond Baptist Church on Sunday evening, October 4th. The church was densely crowded. From the internal appearance of the pretty edifice a visitor would have judged the occasion to have been indicative of heaven rather than the grave. In accordance with a happy idea of the pastor some of the choicest of the wreaths which formed a huge pile on the grave at the Mitcham Cemetery on Friday were temporarily brought away, carefully preserved, and utilized by loving hands in the decoration of the church. The late gentleman was a passionate lover of flowers, and it struck many of his friends as peculiarly appropriate that his memory, so full of bright achievement, should be honoured in this way. The service appealed strongly to the feelings of the large congregation assembled, most of whom had known the deceased gentleman as a neighbour or as an employer. The Rev. S. Fairey's prayers were appropriate to the occasion, and

especially besought comfort and strength for the widow and the family of Mr. Fowler. Deep thankfulness was also expressed for all that the late gentlemen had been to the cause of Christ in the land, to that church, and to the community at large. The lessons chosen were selections from John 14 and 17, 1 Corin. 15, and Romans 8; while the hymns sung were "Sun of my soul Thou Saviour dear" and "Eternal Father strong to save" (a hymn for those at sea), two of Mr. Fowler's favourites; also, "Lead kindly light" and "Peace, perfect peace," which were sung by the desire of Mrs. G. S. Fowler. The choir also pleasingly rendered as an anthem "Sleep on, beloved."

The Rev. S. Fairey chose for his text part of Rev. 14th chap., 15th verse—"They rest from their labours and their works do follow them." He said:—During a short visit which I paid to our departed friend, Mr. Fowler, one afternoon about a month ago, he said to me very quietly and very calmly, "I am feeling so weak that I should not be surprised at any time if my Heavenly Father were to take me to Himself." Our beloved friend had to wait a little while longer before the doors of his Father's House were opened to him, but he waited patiently and expectantly. Last Thursday afternoon when I entered the quiet chamber and saw his noble form lying in that beautiful sleep which God gives to His beloved, the one thought that filled the mind was of "Peace," "Rest." Underneath the wreaths of lovely flowers which kind hearts pro-

vided to cover his form while it was carried to the grave lay the inscription "At rest." And now, in the quiet village cemetery, on the grassy hillside, in the shade of the olive tree, lies all that is earthly of our beloved friend, to sleep on until the Resurrection Morn. Many portions of Scripture have been pondered over by me for this evening's text, but this of all others came back and back again to my heart, "They rest from their labours and their works do follow them." We might speak this evening of our friend's marvellous business abilities by which he won his wealth and gained so high a place in the commercial world; of the intensity and strength of his political convictions; of his public spirit, and of that generous help and wise forethought with which he aided various Christian enterprises. But in this little church which he made of late years his spiritual home, and where he has been brother in Christ to us, and in this quiet village where for twenty-three years he has been a neighbour to many of you, honoured and esteemed, it seems more fitting to refer to his life as a Christian, a neighbour, and a friend, who is taken from us to rest from his labours and to take up again and to complete in a wider sphere those works which follow him. Mr. Fowler was only fifty-seven years old when he died, but as he said to me one day, with a smile, "I have lived a good deal in that time." Life, dear friends, is long or short in proportion to its usefulness. A sharp sword soon wears out the scabbard, but that is better than a blunt and dull weapon with which a

man can never cut his way through the battle of life. Mr. Fowler was the youngest child of earnest and godly Scotch folk, who lived at Anstruther, in Scotland, and was born on March 9, 1839. The father in that home, Mr. James Fowler, born also there in 1794, while engaged in business was for some years the pastor of the Baptist Church in the town. Among the family treasures at Wootton Lea are a number of this gentleman's sermons in his own handwiting.

Mr. Fowler's mother was born in 1797 and died in 1866, after forty-six years of wedded life. When twenty-one years of age our late friend became himself a member of his father's church and was baptized. In the year following he arrived in Adelaide to join his brothers who had already established for themselves a name and renown in the commercial world. There is a little cottage still standing in our Glen where Mr. James Fowler lived forty years ago with his eldest sister, Margaret Fowler, who is still alive in Edinboro', is seventy-six years of age, and was baptized fifty-seven years ago. Mr. G. S. Fowler, with his esteemed brother, Mr. David Fowler, formed one of the original twenty-five Baptists who founded the Flinders Street Church in Adelaide on August 5th, 1861. He aided them in sustaining a vigorous Bible class and also in Sunday school work. While afterwards holding the office of deacon in that church Mr. Fowler also taught in the Sunday School at Mitcham. Removing subsequently to Kensington he became connected with the Norwood

Baptist Church, where as deacon and treasurer he remained until the heavy debt on the church buildings was removed. Twenty-three years next month he came to reside at Wootton Lea, Glen Osmond, and on the establishment of this little church some years afterwards he with Mrs. Fowler and family identified themselves with its interests. What that has meant to this church and community many of you well know. Ever generous and bountiful in his gifts, hearty in his sympathies, shrewd in his advice, and kindly towards all, he was truly loved as a brother in Christ and prized as a friend. In the Baptist denomination he was our ever liberal helper. No church was, I think, ever built without large, and often very large, assistance from his purse, and we have to-day nearly sixty churches. All our denominational funds owe a considerable proportion of their accumulated capital to his liberality. Ministers, whom he always loved and befriended, were constantly cheered by his sympathy and help, and never has he seemed to us happier than when in good health he gathered us together to enjoy his hospitality at his beautiful home, or to take us up the hills on enjoyment bent at our annual assemblies. My own personal loss by his decease is indeed a great one. Nowhere have I found a more constant, kind, and generous friend. I could not tell you what Mr. Fowler has been to me. Mr. Fowler was, I think, a model employer. On his estate he always had a large number of workmen, and some of them have served for him for twenty years. He liked his men to

work hard, and he set them an example himself. He was just and generous—anxious to make work oftentimes for the pleasure it gave him of seeing the men earning their living by his means. Many of his old servants could tell of kindnesses remarkable for their extent, and doubly appreciated for the large-hearted manner in which they were bestowed. The working men in Glen Osmond have lost a good master and a true friend. To them as to others he was a true gentleman.

The home life at Wootton Lea has been very beautiful, the tenderest affections abounded, and were on all sides reciprocated. There, in that family circle, the loss is irreparable. The vacant chair can never be filled again. That the Almighty Father may by the larger manifestation of his love and presence sustain and comfort and cheer the bereaved is the prayer of all our hearts.

That, dear friends, is in brief the earthly side of the picture. May we not look for a little while at the heavenly side? Our text tells us that the dead who die in the Lord "rest from their labours and their works do follow them." That is *their* peculiar blessedness. Our text follows in this chapter immediately after the description of those who in the other state "have no rest day nor night." They have not died in the Lord nor "kept the Commandments of God and the faith of Jesus Christ." Oh! It is not a poor delusion,

a terrible mockery to say of the dead "they are at rest."

"They softly lie
And sweetly sleep
Low in the ground."

Unless they "die in the Lord." And to die in the Lord means first to live in Him, to live in his redeeming love, in his happy and holy service here and now. Life must always precede death. There is nothing in this natural world that can die before it is born, and no soul can die in Christ until it has first of all lived in Christ. I beseech you therefore to learn to say truly for me to "live in Christ;" then may we say of you when you, too, are gone from us "for him, too, to die was gain." Oh, my brother, light the lamps in your train, for there are dark tunnels of trial and sorrow and death before you, and only the lamps lit by God's love are a light through that gloom.

*Think for a moment what it may be to die in the Lord!* Although the Lord has not taken away the mystery of death, yet he has "overcome the sharpness of death for all believers." The fear of death is to us in part instinctive, and as such it is a safeguard to life. It is necessary to every living creature, and it protects it just as pain protects it. Nature is never reconciled to death. We can only fight this fear of death bravely at the foot of that cross where Christ himself died for our sins. But death looked at from beside the Lord of life and death—"great

death" as some have called it—diminishes to a very little thing, or even if there it frowns like a great black cliff blocking up the end of the valley, we shall find there is a way round its base where our Lord will lead us to the sunny uplands beyond. Or it may be, as one has said, like a quiet going to sleep with a loved face bending over our closing eyes, and the same Blessed Face meeting us when we open them in the morning of heaven, bidding us rise to serve in new scenes.

Is it not death, too, "Christ's Minister—mighty and beauteous, though his face be dark?" Does he not, too, stand among the ranks of those "ministering spirits sent forth to minister to those who are heirs of salvation?" Shall we fear to take His hand and let Him lead us up the starry way? And is it not good for us sometimes to see our loved ones "die in the Lord?" Does it not reveal to our hearts the worth and the preciousness of our departed ones? With its refining touch death manifests to our blind eyes what we did not see before. As a great preacher has said, "There are some flowers which only bloom in the night, but then their pure white blossoms are visible in the twilight when all the flaunting purples and red are hid." "Precious in the sight of the Lord is the death of His saints," and precious will it be in our sight, too, if we look on lovingly while the soul is being changed from glory to glory, while it is arraying itself in that shining garment with which it enters into the life that is life indeed.

*Let us think also of that "rest" and "work" with Christ.* "They rest" and yet "their works do follow them." They rest from their labour, but they keep working on. To some minds the prospect of a bath in the ocean of rest is very pleasant indeed. Others when they dwell on the hereafter have bright thoughts of strenuous service. Well! There will be rest from the toil of labour, from the faults of labour and the discouragements of labour. There is no reason for us to believe that in existence after death there is to be a cessation from work but only from labour. That which makes life a labour and a toil to us is not work but weariness. God offers us beyond death not less work but work which achieves more because it is done without any strain. We read in the Holy Scriptures "There shall be no night there." That is to say there shall be no sense of reaction from the burden and heat of the day. Into that higher service with its happier conditions we are assured our friend has gone before us, and we doubt not that he is finding fuller scope for his powers and his unfettered energies. His nature surely would exult and abound in the work of the larger world. God is already making use of him there. And who can tell whether work imperfectly done here may not be completed there. For why do these works follow the departed saints? Are they, too, seeking their heaven? Following on to be perfected? Will it not be a wondrous joy to us if there we may remedy our failures and perfect the works which our Father has given

us to do. The workers up above "sing the new song." They sing as they work and they work as they sing. They sing "the new song," and surely some of the old songs, too, with a newer and deeper meaning, and perhaps this is one of them—

I heard the voice of Jesus say
Come unto me and rest,
Lay down thou weary one, lay down
Thy head upon my breast.
I came to Jesus as I was,
Weary and worn and sad;
I found in Him a resting place
And He has made me glad.

AMEN.

## SERVICE AT NORWOOD BAPTIST CHURCH.

SERMON BY REV. CHAS. BRIGHT.

A SERVICE in memory of the late Mr. George Swan Fowler was held in the Norwood Baptist Church on Sunday morning. The pastor, the Rev. Charles Bright, who is also President of the Baptist Union, delivered a discourse on "Life's work in the light of Immortality," the sermon having special reference to the late Mr. G. S. Fowler. The Church was in deep mourning. Black drapery festooned the walls and the pulpit, and platform and organ gallery were also draped. White lillies and other flowers formed an artistic and very becoming relief. On the wall behind the rostrum a banner was suspended with "G. S. F. at Rest" worked in snowy blossoms.

Appropriate music was contributed during the service. At the opening the choir, with Mr. C. H. Fisher at the organ, sang the anthem "When the heart's bowed down." Hymn No. 627, "Give me the wings of faith to rise," and "Eternal Father, strong to save," and "Peace, perfect peace," the last two being favourite hymns of the deceased gentleman, were sung, as well as "Lead, kindly light;" the choir also rendered "What are these arrayed in white robes?"

The lessons read were Revelation i., and vii. 9-17.

The preacher took as his text Rev. xiv. 13—"And I heard a voice from Heaven saying unto me, Write, blessed are the dead which die in the Lord from henceforth. Yea, saith the spirit, that they may rest from their labours; and their works do follow them." The Divinest passages have been spoken to man in the hour when his heart was overwhelmed with some great grief, and when he felt the things of life too much for him. John hears a voice from heaven. He had heard it before when He climbed the slope of Hermon and saw his Master transfigured in glory for a few minutes during His ministry, when he saw the great spirits of the Old Testament, Moses and Elias, who had come to converse with Him and delegate their powers into His hands. It was then that he heard the voice from Heaven, "This is my beloved son in whom I am well pleased." He had leaned upon his Master's breast at the last supper, and had heard His heart beat and knew something of the tenderness, the pathos of that Divine life, and of the love that went out towards His followers and friends. He had stood by Christ on Calvary and seen the shame to which He was exposed, but he had also seen how He triumphed by the greatness of the sacrifice which He was enabled to make for mankind. Many years had passed since then; and a generation had come and gone. The ranks of those whom he knew had been thinned. He is away in a strange land. At the present moment he is cut off even from association with those who were identi-

fied with him in his Christian work. He is away in the little isle of Patmos in the Ægean; and as he paces its shore and hears the waves boom upon the rocks, and as he thinks over it all and wonders what this great mystery may mean, there is heard a voice from Heaven saying "Blessed are the dead which die in the Lord from henceforth." One cannot help but contrast for a moment this man who had espoused the cause of Christ, and who was one of the advocates of His Kingdom, with that great man at St. Helena in the early years of this century who felt the disappointment as he looked upon all his victories and saw the empire which he had founded crumbling into dust. He who had lived with Jesus Christ looks out and beholds the King Eternal, looks up and beholds a man who was despised, crowned with unspeakable glory, and sees Him whose hands were pierced upon Calvary swaying the sceptre of the universe, and as he looked he heard a voice from Heaven saying "Write, Blessed."

Jesus Christ during His ministry never stopped to prove the doctrine of immortality. He always assumed it. It was a fact that laid at the foundation of His teaching. It was the fact that laid at the back of His ministry. Take away that from the life of Jesus Christ and you change the whole character of the New Testament. Take that away and all that beautiful mental structure which Jesus Christ raised, all the force of that unique life has gone. There is nothing left but a few moral precepts without any inspiring motive to man to fulfil them. Christ always

assumed the truth of this doctrine. He emphasised it in many ways. It was He who brought life and immortality to life in the words He spoke, in the spiritual kingdom which He founded, in the reference to His own person, in the reign that has lasted for nearly two millenia, in all the life and vigour that He has infused in the innumerable multitudes who have committed themselves to Him. He declared it here and He has continued to proclaim it since He ascended to the Throne. The evidence for the truth of this teaching is not found in the way of demonstration, like that of a mathematical problem. The first is qualitative; the second quantitative. In mathemetical proof you simply deal with quantities and because of this can demonstrate. But in ethics and history the case is different. Here you have to deal with qualities. The matter rests upon a different basis. Jesus never attempted to demonstrate or to syllogize according to western modes of thought. The seer does not need to reason; he sees and declares. Jesus saw the truth and declared it. He Himself is its best evidence. He was like a traveller who had passed through an unknown land and became acquainted with the character, climate, and life of the country. The gospels record a fragment of His teaching and reveal the profound depths of His wisdom. It was not because He knew less but because He knew more that Christ spoke as He did. He saw what the ordinary eye sees. Of everything that comes within the ken of the human understanding He was cognizant, but He saw the

other hemisphere of life which we do not see. He saw the two hemispheres, this visible one and that other which to us is invisible. He declared the facts of the latter in His life and teaching. And so the words of the text tell us that those who are to inherit the blessedness spoken of here are the men and women whose lives have been conformed to the purpose of Jesus Christ. "Blessed are the dead which die in the Lord;" it is to those that this blessedness is promised.

There is one thing that meets us on the very surface of a question like this. We look out upon the various departments of nature, and one of the first facts that strikes us is that nature cares only for the type or the race and very little for the individual. The law governs all plant life. It obtains in the realms of the insect and animal life, and man is no exception. Generations come and pass away, but the race lives on. Individuals are born, come to perfection, die and return to their primitive elements, but the race, the type of these various species, continues through the centuries. We see that the law has prevailed through all the past; by an examination of the strata of the earth, or the facts of astronomy, or the course of human history with the varied institutions of different nations. Everywhere we are confronted with the fact that while the race lives on and endures through all these millenia the individuals who compose it pass into oblivion. It is just at that point where Jesus Christ meets man. It has been said that He singled out the individual

when He started His work, and that it was through individuals that He influenced society. But there is another side to that. And it is that Jesus Christ spoke of the redemption of the individual, that He proclaimed for each the eternal life and fellowship with God.

Character is what Jesus Christ emphasises. It seems that many have come to some such an opinion as this, that it does not very much matter whether we attend to this building up of character or whether we neglect it, that it will come to very much the same thing in the end. Most emphatically I say that if you look at the teaching of Christ you will find a direct contradication to that. Immediately you look into the life and history of mankind and of many you have known, you will find that it makes all the difference as to the elements which have been built into the character, as to the standard on which character is formed, as to whether the faculties have been unfolded and developed, as to whether there has been the aim at a noble type of manhood, as to whether there has been a seeking to climb to something higher and better, to a source where the aspirations of the heart would find that which would satisfy and through which these Christly elements should be built into the life.

"Blessed are the dead which die in the Lord," because in Christ there is life. Among the permanent things in connection with human life and thought we have to place character. There is a multitude of things with which we constantly have to do that belong to the fleeting. But

character belongs to the enduring or permanent. It is one of the things that is destined to abide. It will remain when the glitter and glare of the present has died away. So I take it that the very first message spoken here is in respect to those who have conformed to the type of character seen in Christ, and the blessedness referred to is a consequence resulting from their union with Him.

And in all this Christ confirms the instincts of the human heart. It matters not what section of the race we select, or upon what line we fix, these instincts—the aspiration after God, the yearning for immortality—are seen asserting themselves. As soon as historic man comes before us, he comes with these as part of the constitution of his nature. And in answer Jesus said, "If it were not so, I would have told you." If it be thought that individual exceptions contradict this, there is a short and ready answer to the objector. This is a case where the exceptions do not prove the rule. One of the saddest sights is to see a person with reason dethroned, and quite as sad often to know the cause of it. Cause and consequence are seen clearly enough by the physician. And there is a closer analogy than is commonly supposed between habits of thought and conduct, resulting in a state of moral idiotcy, in which all that is divine in man or woman may be extinguished. The two series of causes are constantly operating, and the result may be witnessed in society. To get a true estimate of man you would not go to a tribe of savages, a hospital, or an asylum for the

insane, but to those who are healthy and developed. It is not in the above-named, but in the natural state you can read and understand the permanent qualities of man's nature. It is to these that Jesus speaks. Long before the remotest planet of the solar system was discovered, there were seen oscillations in another body, that could be only accounted for by the supposition that they were caused by some unseen world revolving further off in space. When that body was discovered all was clear. Man's heart had been going out for God and immortality through all the past, Jesus Christ came to declare that God was the Father, and the immortal life, the heritage of all who received Him.

Those who have been united with Christ, whose days are ended here, have passed into a state of rest, "they rest from their labours." It was the one thing they longed and struggled for during their earthly life. All the rush and hurly burly of life would, if we analysed it, come to this, that we are seeking to attain some intellectual distinction, or rise to affluence, or reach some condition of being in which they shall be able to find rest. They believe such a state possible, and much of the struggle that is going on in society to-day resolves itself into the effort to win it. Here again Jesus Christ meets us as in the case of individual immortality. When in those ancient days He looked upon the struggling masses and saw the restlessness of heart and the utter futility of many of their aims, when he saw that they were on the wrong track He

stood up before the people of His day and said "Come unto Me and rest." Strange it may seem that one clothed in human flesh should make such an offer, the fact remains that He declared Himself to be the fountain of rest.

It is just at these central points where Jesus Christ rises above every other teacher, where His voice is felt to be the voice divine, and where it appears that He came out from God to disclose the facts which teach the fundamental points of being which have to do with man's immortal life and the perfect development of character. Do you think that the rest into which the righteous have entered is a rest of placidity? There are exquisite pictures in this book of the Revelation which give hints respecting that higher life. The walls with their several foundations and the gates of pearl, the streets of gold, the harpers harping with their harps, and the new song which the redeemed sing to the Christ upon the Throne. But when you tie these down to a literal meaning it seems to me that you destroy all their beauty. The seer gathers up all the most exquisite things in human life, all that is most beautiful in the works of man, all that he prizes, all that touches his heart, and that makes life gladsome, all that speaks the deepest consolation to the heart. He gathers these up and places them yonder and says "These, all these things are in perfection for you, take them as symbols of what shall constitute the life of those who have passed into the land of the blessed." And those who have been called away have entered upon higher service. They have com-

pleted their task here, and have passed to a diviner ministry in the presence of their Lord.

"Blessed are the dead which die in the Lord, from henceforth: Yea, saith the Spirit, that they may rest from their labours, and their works do follow them;" and so it is taught in this and many other passages which might be quoted from the New Testament, that the work of life in the deepest sense will be with us in the other world. How is it in this present state in reference to the matter of character to which I have referred? You will find that all work enters into man's nature, that it becomes part and parcel of himself. You will find that a man cannot perform any of the tasks of life into which he puts his heart and soul and brain without an incalculable effect being produced upon his character. All work enters into the composition of the man's real nature and his character is simply the resultant of all that he does. When the task is noble there will be a constant enlargment of the man himself, there will be accumulating strength, and his life will be far reaching. It is then that his environment is widened, that he comes into the larger world and rises into a sublimer condition of being. It may be said of every one here, your works have followed you and they are with you to-day. They have made you just the man or woman you are this morning. If you have put noble work into your life and filled the hours with noble purposes, if there has been pure motives actuating you, and if your hands have been diligent in the ministry of good, the result of all is with you now.

It has been said that this doctrine of immortality has a selfish aspect, that it would be far nobler to dispense with all thought of the higher and future life as a reward for righteous service. But what is the teaching of Christ? It is that he who wins this life must have allied himself with the highest and noblest type of manhood that can be conceived, that it has been by his seeking to come into conformity with that, and that there has been an expansion of man's whole life and of the unfolding of his faculties. Apart from the imitation of some noble type and the incorporation into life of its elements there can be no enlargement of being.

Bound up with this Christian doctrine of immortality is the teaching that he who would win it must be constantly engaged in the ministry of good. It is not that one lives a selfish life to win Heaven or escape punishment which must follow as the result of evildoing, but it is that men and women should minister through their lives, and to those around them. Apart from such motive, some such teaching, and standard, it is difficult to see how man's nature is to be completed. But with it we feel the force of the apostle's words, "Ye are complete in Him." And by the ministry of the Holy Spirit we shall be fitted for that immortal life which our Lord has promised. You think to-day of those who have gone away. At this moment it is easy to recall their faces and figures. Out of the years of the past they come, and look silently upon us. But their voice is no longer heard and their hands

shall no more touch ours. These widowed hearts may break with anguish, or wrap themselves about with the weeds of grief, but those who have passed to the silent land come back no more for ever. But in the bitterness of death there is heard the voice, "I am the resurrection and the life," and, once more, "Blessed are the dead which die in the Lord." And as we raise the eye to Him who speaks, for us also is the vision of the great multitude which no man can number, standing before the Throne and before the Lamb, arrayed in white robes, and palms in their hands, and they cry with a great voice, saying, "Salvation unto our God, which sitteth on the Throne, and unto the Lamb." And the land of silence is changed to a land of song, and the sadness of death to a vision of the life immortal.

And now I would like to say a few words respecting him who has been called away. It is not for me to deal this morning with the splendid ability which he showed in his commercial life or the success which attended his efforts. My acquaintance with him was not sufficient even if I felt disposed, to warrant me intruding upon the sacred privacies of his family life or upon those of intimate friendship. There are two aspects which I would recall to your memory this morning. The first is his connection with the early history of this church. It is just about 28 years since an earnest and intelligent band of Christian men formed themselves into a church in this place. Among the foremost was the late George Swan

Fowler. It is to his ability, his counsel, and his generosity that the work accomplished twenty years ago is to be largely ascribed. Others there were, of course, who gave their counsel and their money, but it may be said, as those who know the facts best will gladly admit, that he stood as first. It is only right that we who to-day form this community should recognise the debt of gratitude that is owed to him. The next thing I think every one of us should remember to-day is the position that he has occupied and the way he helped the Baptist Church in this colony. It need not be said that his gifts have been princely. It need not be said that it was to him that the success of the fund called the Jubilee Fund, which was completed a few years ago, was mainly owing. In reference to home mission work—that is the helping of poor and struggling churches—he has always stood first among representative men here. In regard to the Baptist College, he believed in an educated ministry, and longed that the College should be made worthy of the functions which it was called on to discharge. Altogether I looked upon him as a man of strong intellectual power, a man who filled his life with noble deeds, and a man who will be missed not only by scores in this colony in reference to private beneficence but by scores elsewhere. It is very likely he would not have agreed with me in the conception of the genius and full purpose of Christianity, but those who knew him best speak tenderly of his consistency, of a great heart that beat in his bosom, and of his ardent attachment to the

great Saviour Christ. Brothers and sisters he has entered into his rest. Whatever was noble in that life of his let us seek to utilize, and when the summons is given to us may it be ours to join the fellowship and share with him the life immortal.

During the service many of the congregation were visibly affected, and at the close the "Dead March in Saul" was played by the organist (Mr. Fisher).

At the meeting for the celebration of the ordinance of the Lord's Supper in the Church immediately after the service the following resolution was adopted:—

"That the members of this Church deeply deplore the decease of Mr. George Swan Fowler. They recognise with gratitude the part which he took in the early history of the church, and are thankful for the counsel which he rendered and also for his munificence through which largely the church buildings were freed from the encumbrance of debt. They desire to express their heartfelt sympathy with Mrs. Fowler and family, and earnestly pray that the consolation and support of our Heavenly Father may be vouchsafed them, and that the peace of the great Saviour, Christ, may dwell in their hearts, and that His presence may cheer them in their sorrow."

Signed on behalf of the Church,

CHAS. BRIGHT, Pastor.

NORWOOD,
OCTOBER 4th, 1896.

## FLINDERS-STREET.

### SERMON BY REV. J. G. RAWS.

AT the Flinders Street Baptist Church, Adelaide, on Sunday morning, October 4th, the sermon and the whole of the preceding service, bore special reference to the career and death of Mr. George Swan Fowler. The hymns sung had been specially chosen for the occasion by Mrs. Fowler, widow of the deceased gentleman, and were most effectively rendered by the choir and large congregation present. The selections were—"Peace, perfect peace," "Rock of Ages," "For those at sea," and "Lead, kindly light."

The Rev. J. G. Raws read as the Scripture lesson the parable of the talents (Matthew, chap. xxv., from the 14th verse), after which he gave most impressive utterance to the following prelude :—

"It seems fitting that some reference should be made here to-day to the death of Mr. Fowler. As many of you know, he arrived in this colony in the summer of 1860. He had been baptized in the spring of that year in the little fishing town of Anstruther, on the coast of Scotland, before leaving home. When he reached this land he at

once associated with Christian people, and he was one of the twenty-five who formed this church thirty-five years ago. Though he had not been in membership with this church for some considerable time, he had never lost his interest in it, never wavered in his loyal personal friendship to the pastor, Mr. Mead. Again and again he had been consulted, and quite recently there was given to him a share in the responsibility of selecting a second minister for this place. Not only has our own church, and the denomination which he served so well, suffered loss, but the city and the whole colony are the poorer to-day for the absence of a man of force of character, of high sense of honour, and of broad and warm sympathies. The very large number of friends who assembled about his grave on Friday, and the references to him in our daily papers, bear testimony to the respect in which he was held by the community at large. And as I stood by the grave and saw in the faces, not only of his partners, but of the men employed on the estate, and connected with the firm traces of deep emotion, I felt that he was not only important in the commercial world, but was respected, too, by those who knew him best. This is not the time, and I am not the man to give anything like an adequate sketch of his life and character. Men of his type are like the hills at the foot of which he made his home. You must stand at some distance from them if you would see their full proportions; and it is too soon, we are too near him to judge rightly what he was and what he did. But

having been in somewhat close association with him of recent days, I have noticed two or three things about which I may venture to speak. The first, Sir Thomas Fowell Buxton said that the longer he lived the more certain he was that the great difference between men—between the feeble and the powerful, the great and the insignificant—was energy, invincible determination; and he added, no talents, no circumstances could make a two-legged creature a man without it. Mr. Fowler had this quality in an eminent degree. In his earlier days he was credited with driving through an enormous amount of work. When the English mail came in at long intervals, he was accustomed to sit up working till the early hours of the morning, and when younger men retired exhausted, he simply went home for a bath and breakfast, and came back fresh as the dew. He never spared himself or allowed self-indulgence of any kind to interfere with the demands of his business. It might be said of him, "Whatsoever his hand found to do he did it with all his might."

It could be said of Mr. Fowler, also, as was said of the Napoleon of commerce in the North of England, that "he had the power of combining large views and far-reaching plans with a minute attention to details." There are men who can form large and ambitious schemes, but they fail in the grasp of the details which are essential to success. There are others who are master of every small particular, but they have no largeness of view. Mr. Fowler had both. He saw the whole, as it were, at a glance, and yet he saw

every little part which made up the whole, Mr. Fowler was slow, careful, and cautious in planning, but he was bold and daring the moment his resolution was made.

Then again, in talks I had with him recently I think I traced a fine discrimination of character. He had studied the book of life, and he seemed to me to know men. He was most delighted in literature with those recent character sketches so charmingly written of his own countrymen. He knew how to select the right man for the right place, and he was able to surround himself with men in whom he had confidence, and who had confidence in him. Whenever he spoke about men, which was not often, I was impressed, too, with his readiness to assume a good motive even when he disagreed with the man's action. I suppose he could make a close bargain, and that he sought full value for his money. But he was proud also to give value for money in return. And of all things he abhorred indolence, meanness, anything approaching what was dishonourable.

Of his inner life not much can be said. He did not, he could not "set wide the doors that bar the secret bridal chambers of the heart." He had the Scotchman's reserve. But there must be good soil for the good harvest, a sure foundation for the stable building; and beneath Mr. Fowler's energy and ability there was a deep, real inner life. One is thankful for the word dropped to his own pastor in a spirit of perfect resignation, that he felt his Heavenly Father would very shortly call him home. He had his faults. Before the

mellowing process set in he was a man of strong passions, and with a temper not easily governed. And if he could be present now he would be the first to resent anything like flattery or fulsomeness. We sung this morning four hymns selected for us by Mrs. Fowler, two of which are her special favourites—the one we opened with and the one with which we close—("Peace, perfect peace," and "Lead, kindly light"), and two which were his favourites, "Rock of Ages" and "Eternal Father, strong to save." Surely the former of these testifies that conscious of sin, he also knew the fountain in which there is cleansing; and the other hymn indicates his wide sympathy with those that go down to the sea in ships. He had so frequently crossed the sea himself, that the words "Eternal Father, strong to save" appealed to him with special force. Whatever he was or was not, he was a man ever diligent in the use of the talents God had given him, and generous, not only to his own Church, but to many institutions and important interests in the whole land. He belonged to a group of men to whom there will be a glad surprise at the last. For when in that great day, conscious of failures and imperfections, these shall say "Lord, when saw we Thee hungry or naked, and ministered unto Thee?" it is to such that the King shall answer—"Inasmuch as ye did it to him whose fortunes had been wrecked; inasmuch as ye did it to the widow and orphan child; inasmuch as ye did it to the poor preacher of My Gospel; inasmuch as ye did it unto one of the least of these ye did it unto Me."

"Purified Wealth" was the subject of the succeeding sermon by Mr. Raws, who selected for his text Numbers xxxi. v. 23—"Everything that may abide the fire ye shall make it go through the fire, and it shall be clean;.....and all that abideth not the fire ye shall make go through the water."

The text contained a certain command as to the purification of the spoil taken from the princes of Moab and of Midian. Coming from such a source it was held to be unfit for use or possession, until it had been ceremonially cleansed by fire or by water. Gold and silver ornaments, metal utensils and weapons, were passed by the priests through a fire kindled from off the brazen altar. Articles of wood and leather, and textile materials were plunged into the water of separation. "Everything that may abide the fire ye shall make to go through the fire, and it shall be clean. . . . and all that abideth not the fire ye shall make go through the water."

Now, as then, the gain of worldly things needs purifying. Dr. Dale said rich men have their uses. But that rich men have their perils none can deny. Wealth, however, is a relative term. When a youth's wages are raised from 5s. to 7s. 6d. per week; when a working man commences business for himself; when a shop-assistant becomes a tradesman in a humble way; each in his own world is exposed to danger from prosperity, as is the great capitalist whose losses and gains are counted by thousands. Instances occur to every thoughtful mind of men who

have risen in the outward but who have fallen in character; who have increased in riches, but who have diminished in proportion, in services rendered to the generation around them, to the Christ who redeemed them. How then may men go forward in the temporal without falling away in the spiritual? It can be done. Poverty is not synonymous with piety. Abraham prospered in all things, but he became a finer man, a more godly man, the older he grew. Joseph did it. He had honour and power, but instead of being spoiled by success he was a truer spirited man when he stood next to the King than when he lived in his father's house in Canaan. Nehemiah, Joseph of Arimathea, and Gaius, to whom John wrote an epistle—these were all men of worldly wealth and social position, and yet they were men of sterling worth, of undoubted piety, and of simple childlike faith. What was the secret of it? In the New Testament there are no rules as to the way in which a man should hold or use his wealth, but there are certain broad principles that are a help.

First, let a man realize that he is distinct from his money. A man who had made for himself a position in this colony was *prima facie* entitled to respect because of the qualities, the industry, the ability, the devotion to his calling, which may have enabled him to succeed. But the mere fact that a man had made a hundred or a thousand pounds by trade or speculation, did not make him a better or a truer man, than he who earned weekly wages, or who found it hard to make both ends meet. It was said "If

you make a fool a millionaire he will only be a million times bigger fool than he was before." The question about others is not "What *has* he?" but "What *is* he?" in heart, conscience, and soul. And the question for ourselves is not how much money have we, what is the amount we paid for our houses, but what are we, stripped of all these things? Emerson complains that strolling along the beach, in raptures with the sky and the sea, he met fishermen who could say nothing but "How's fish?" And was not a man poor, did he not live in a narrow world, was he not little in the sight of God when he could only talk "shop?" Such see nothing in landscapes but building sites, and they see nothing in our hills because they are so disappointed that they are not filled with gold. Men should remember first of all that they are men, that they have souls and an eternal destiny, that they belong to God, and have been redeemed by the blood of Jesus Christ; and while it was a common duty to be diligent in business it was also a duty to be fervent in spirit, serving the Lord.

They should be ever ready to refuse or to surrender illegitimate gains. No man could be right with God who sought success by what was unlawful, or who retained that to which he found he had no just claim. A writer had said that he was once trying to lead a boy friend and a lady to Jesus Christ. But there was an insuperable stumbling block. He found that the boy was troubled by the fact that he had gained a prize at school by copying

from another boy, and that the lady had retained for her own use money entrusted to her for others. It was not till the boy sent the prize to the rightful owner, and the lady had paid up the money with compound interest that either of them could find peace in Jesus Christ. What did the Lord require? Not costly churches, built with unhallowed gains, not magnificent charities which had come from mean and grasping avarice. This is what the Lord requires, that we shall do justly, love mercy, and walk humbly with our God.

There is a safeguard in the cultivation of generosity. Abraham, Joseph, and Nehemiah were all distinguished by their unselfish use of their wealth. Abraham gave to his nephew Lot the choice of the land which lay before them, offering to go to the right if he chose the left, and *vice versa*. Nehemiah for twelve years kept one hundred and fifty men daily at his table; Joseph of Arimathea gave up his grave to Jesus; Gaius kept open house, and with a generous hand delighted to send forward the travelling ambassadors of Jesus Christ. As showing the deep piety of John Rylands, the great Manchester manufacturer, it was recorded in his diary that on a certain Saturday in 1843 he went with a friend to conclude the lease and pay the first instalment for the land for the Gorton Mills, arranging for possession on the Monday after. "This is a most important event, a new era in my existence;" wrote Mr. Rylands. "If I am successful I promise to devote the fruits in the service of that Being who has been my

Shepherd, and who has conducted me through devious tracks in safety." And the merchant prince of Manchester became princely in his generosity. "Francis," said his mother, Mrs. Crossley, "if the Lord prosper us in this place the poor shall taste of it." They were successful, and to-day there is no town of the same size in all England with such magnificent institutions for the benefit of all classes as Halifax. "Let a man labour, working with his hands the thing that is good, that he may have to give to him that needeth." There are men with energy and with gifts. But there are men who have neither of these endowments, men who have been overcome by what was no fault of theirs. It is yours and mine to make life easier for these, to give them more favourable surroundings, to bear one another's burdens, so fulfilling the law of Christ. So whatever our incomes, or our occupations, remember we are distinct from what we have, and eternity depends not on what a man *has* but upon what a man *is*. Remember if you are a child of God that you grieve His Holy Spirit, and lose the joy of a Christian life, if you seek to be rich in ways that are dark and evil; if you hold on to that which you now know to be wrong. And remember that we are stewards, who have that we may help, not merely by charity but by those larger measures which shall make the necessity for charity less and less.

Be right with God; be governed by the principles of this book; and gains and losses, like sunshine and rain, shall make fruitful in the things which are acceptable to Him.

ARTICLE FROM *The South Australian Register*,
OCTOBER 2, 1896.

# THE LATE MR. G. S. FOWLER.

THROUGH the death of Mr. George Swan Fowler South Australia has lost a very able man and a conspicuously useful colonist. The deceased gentleman never possessed an over-strong physical constitution, and he had for months past been dying gradually; yet almost as long as he continued to breathe he manifested the same restlessness of energy which so peculiarly marked his active career. In the days of his declining strength his spirit chafed on account of the check which his enfeebled heart placed upon his vigorous mind, for to a man of his temperament enforced passivity was one of the most irksome of trials. Few men believed more thoroughly than he did in the maxim which conveys the assurance that it is better to wear out than to rust out. Associated with a great natural aptitude for commercial pursuits, Mr. Fowler was distinguished by an enormous power for work, a genius for organization, and a wonderful mastery of detail. Under his direction everything was done system-

atically—as in the earliest stages of his business experience, so in the latest. To a man possessing the innate qualities of a merchant prince South Australia offered splendid opportunities when Mr. Fowler arrived here a third of a century ago, and how well they have been utilized is almost as well known as the colony itself is known. The firm, with the earlier fortunes of which the late Mr. David Fowler was so prominently and honourably associated, and the immense enterprises of which the younger brother, now deceased, for many years chiefly directed, is one of the most important and extensive commercial concerns in the Southern Hemisphere, and even in "the chief mart of the world" it is well known and held in high repute. For to exceptional shrewdness and alertness of apprehension and action Mr. Fowler joined an uncompromising regard for the highest principles of honour. In his opinion mere smartness without restraining scrupulousness merited a far less complimentary name than is sometimes given to it by people who admire the glitter of apparent success though the lustre may be only the sparkle of tinsel.

Thus Mr. Fowler's record remained unblemished after he had attained eminence as a great merchant, just as it had been in a humbler position in which he began his commercial career. No wonder then that a man possessing such qualities as those indicated should have impressed fellow-legislators with his individuality during the short time which was all that his constantly unsatisfactory

health permitted him to devote to Parliamentary work. Whilst in the Assembly he was recognised as one of the greatest authorities on State finance—and among the clearest exponents of that difficult subject—who had ever had a seat in the House; and well matching insight which was keen, and calculations which were accurate, were an enviable directness of speech and absolute fearlessness in expressing his opinions. Indeed his independence in profession and in action gained him opponents whom he seldom troubled to placate, preferring to leave to time the explanation and the vindication of his conduct. The natural complement of Mr. Fowler's performances in commerce and in politics were the schemes of benevolence which he initiated and otherwise assisted in connection with the Christian Church and in the more general capacity of a good citizen in the truest sense of the word. Many religious communities and far more private recipients of his liberal bounty have abundant reason to endorse regarding Mr. Fowler the record inscribed among the memorials of an old-world merchant prince—

> The multiplication table was not his creed,
> His paternoster, and his decalogue.

It seems a hard decree of Fate that such a man should die while still scarcely past his prime, and at a stage in life when successful men usually begin to think of enjoying years of leisure in compensation for their toil. There is an anomaly, too, in the fact that when far less achievement is publicly recognised a colonist so prominent and so

eminently serviceable to South Australia should pass out of the world without the slightest formal recognition of his worth and his work; but, after all, such anomalies seem as unavoidable as Fate is inexorable.

FROM *The Southern Baptist*, OF OCTOBER 15, 1896.

## MR. GEORGE SWAN FOWLER.

TO write a notice describing the life and character of the late Mr. Fowler would be a large undertaking. We do not in this article attempt such a task. His life is full of importance from a moral and religious point of view, even apart from the secular aspects of it. It is important to learn not only what he did and how he succeeded, but also to know what were the vital principles which lay at the root of all his practical course. The historical aspects of his life are sketched elsewhere, and all that concerns him will be read by a wide circle of deeply-attached and mourning friends. Numbers feel that his departure is a personal loss, and they equally feel that his life has been an example and an inspiration. If we can point out some of the characteristic qualities which have tended to such results, our attempt will be received with thankfulness by many of our readers.

One very prominent feature in the life of Mr. Fowler was that of a prompt and open-hearted generosity. This was manifest to the public generally by the readiness on

his part to contribute to the various schemes of usefulness that were every now and then brought under his notice. This was the case in connection with almost all the Baptist Churches that were established at different times throughout the colony. The various denominational funds in existence also were either originated or greatly increased by his donations and influence. But this aspect of his life and character is better known by ministers, who have in times of difficulty been sharers of his munificient generosity. There are those in our ranks, for instance, who have been made to feel (while still in England, and thinking of migrating to this new land to take up their abode among strangers) that they were really coming among friends, through the cheeriness that an interview with him in the old country had infused into their hearts. To have, for example, a communication to the effect that a certain amount of money had been sent home for the passage of the minister and his family, with a hint from Mr. Fowler not to be disturbed if that were found insufficient, as he was ready to supplement the deficiency, was an experience that would create a fine warmth of confidence toward a land that could be represented in such a fashion. It was not simply the amount of money guaranteed, though that sometimes was not insignificant, but the timeliness and the entire friendliness of the action, and the generosity of heart that would prompt such a course at a time which could not but prove a crisis in a man's life. This, however, is but an instance. This article

will awaken reminiscences in some hearts among our number that will take the memory back to periods, when, but for the timely and generous way in which Mr. Fowler discovered and met some pressing difficulty, the life's bark must have been stranded in the storm and stress of adverse circumstances.

Then, again, Mr. Fowler's life presents a fine instance of steady, consistent adherence to principle. In religious, political, social, and all other questions he stood firm as a rock to the convictions of his conscience. No one ever heard of vacillation or trimming in his public life. He was, however, always ready to listen to argument, but his reasons were based upon substantial grounds. And it stands closely connected with this to remark upon his indomitable courage. Along with moral courage it may be assumed that there was also constitutional courage. In that quality he seemed to possess a great advantage. There may be nerve without moral stamina, and there may be the moral steadfastness when the nerves quiver and the heart quails; the latter, of course is the nobler man. But if we judge aright, Mr. Fowler possessed both qualities. He had the strength to stand firm, and the bodily vigour to face difficulty and danger with unflinching nerve. In various instances, circumstances have occurred which put his courage to the proof. In the exposure of unworthy men who were seeking to win their way into public life, in the unhappy postion in which employers found themselves in a time of strike, and in the contest of a popular election,

he never flinched or faltered in a matter in which he believed himself in the right. Men might differ as to particular questions which might be under discussion, but the admiration of all whose opinion is worth having, is secured for the man who elects his course according to his convictions of righteousness, and who is moved neither to the right nor to the left by fear, or favour, or self-interest.

Mr. Fowler was not ready to think evil of a man, or to judge him harshly without proof, if he happened to be under a cloud. The writer of this article was once made the medium of communication with a man who was supposed to have badly fallen morally from a position in which he had stood extremely high in popular esteem. Mr. Fowler simply could not believe that a man for whom he personally entertained great regard could have been guilty of what was laid to his charge, and the invitation which was forwarded was that he should become Mr. Fowler's guest, so that he might shelter himself while the fierce blast of public opprobium was sweeping over him. It matters not who he was nor what amount of culpability did or did not attach to him. But what is beautiful to observe is, that it is not the man who is most marked by moral rectitude that is ready to lightly think evil of another, or to withhold the helping hand and the hospitable roof from the erring one. The man who is most truly honourable does not cherish mean thoughts of others, but is the one who is most merciful toward those who fall.

Perhaps it was not until the closing scene of Mr. Fowler's life that some of us knew fully the tenderness that dwelt in his heart, and the eloquence which that indwelling tenderness could impart to his speech. Some of us can never forget his last address to the assembled ministers of the Baptist Union in his son's dining-room, just about a fortnight before his death. It is to be feared that the effort cost him dear in the expenditure of the short stock of vitality he had to draw upon. The words came slowly and the utterance was feeble; but for pathos, and tenderness, and winsome persuasiveness, it stands unequalled in the memories of some of us. It was a beautiful instance of the sustained efficiency of the mental and spiritual nature while the mortal tabernacle was crumbling into ruins.

This is not a character sketch; for many reasons it does not profess to partake of such a quality. It is a fragment; but it expresses some thoughts that have dwelt in the mind of one who is a friend. It does not attempt the task of criticism, or analysis, or completeness. We approach our subject under the shadow of present bereavement. We have a great sense of loss. We feel more capable of expressing our sorrow than of pourtraying a character. We essay to lay a wreath upon the grave of our friend, and we now wait till the day dawns and the shadows flee away, and we ourselves be received into the company of "the great majority" that constitutes the general assembly gathered before the throne of God.

FROM *The Southern Baptist.*

## FUNERAL WREATHS.

THE death of Mr. G. S. Fowler has been a heavy blow to the Baptist denomination in South Australia. Standing as he has done for over 30 years in the front line, among its enterprising and sagacious leaders, his decease has caused in some minds little less than consternation. Were it not that his eldest son is promising to be equally helpful in the councils and labours of the Union, his loss would have fallen with an effect utterly depressing. As it is, those who have for many years known Mr. Fowler's worth, enjoyed his friendship, worked by his side, and read his heart, realize very keenly the immensity of the loss the Baptist Union has sustained. "Know ye not that there is a prince and a great man fallen in Israel this day?"

We are not claiming for our deceased friend that he was a perfect man, for he himself would have repudiated the thought, but we do claim that he has been an illustrious Baptist, whose memory is worthy of perpetuation, and whose services to the cause of Jesus Christ have gone far

toward making the religious life of South Australia strong, and pure, and robust.

Coming from a humble, Godfearing, Scotch Baptist home, a son of parents of singular intelligence and remarkable for their deep piety and devotion to Christian work, Mr. Fowler early found his heart drawn to Jesus Christ. Work was his great delight, and he discovered a congenial sphere for his spiritual and mental energies in the Baptist churches in and around Adelaide. No ministers needed to say to him "Whatsoever thy hand findeth to do, do it with thy might," for he was more often their example. Carlyle's "gospel of work" needed not to be preached in his ears, for toil of every honourable kind was his greatest pleasure. Side by side with his intense business energy ran his spiritual sympathies and Christian zeal. Probably he would have lived longer if he had been less intense. Such was not, however, his choice, nor such his nature.

But Mr. Fowler was withal a cautious, canny Scotchman. Many a time he put the drag on the denominational coach, urging that the pace was too fast to be safe, when others were urging to greater speed. At times some thought him over cautious; on other occasions it had been well if his comrades had yielded to his efforts to restrain. But when mistakes had been made, and the coach was stuck fast, he was too true a friend and gentleman to leave his comrades in the lurch. Putting his shoulder to the wheel, when others were getting dispirited, he wrought some great

financial deliverances for ministers, churches, and the denominational funds.

The name of George Swan Fowler has ever stood high—at the highest—in business circles. Keen and masterly as a merchant, far-seeing and enterprising, realizing how a fortune could be made while other men were despairing, there was yet so strict an integrity, such honourable dealing, that the name of Fowler is in Adelaide to-day the synonym for mercantile rectitude. He knew that he possessed the faculty for making money, and that, to him, was a gift of his Heavenly Father's to be used for His glory. Indiscriminating charity, pauperising the poor, was in his eyes a sin; but to employ large bodies of men in remunerative labour was his delight. His accumulated capital was never hoarded, but invested in great enterprises which brought regular employment to large numbers of his fellow-colonists. Through all the financial panics of late years the firm of which he was the head was calmly and strongly guided, and none have been brought to grief through the misfortunes or inefficiencies of D. & J. Fowler.

The daily papers have since Mr. Fowler's decease spoken of him as "a merchant prince." His hospitalities were princely. Seldom in any part of the world, we believe, have Baptist ministers been so royally banqueted as at the family mansion at Wootton Lea. When wearied with hard service, or exhausted with over-work, or on delegations from other lands, happy were the servants of Jesus Christ who were ministered unto in that "house beautiful." Is

there a minister of our denomination or a Church that Mr. Fowler ever refused to befriend in time of need? Is there one to whom he ever gave help in any way but a royal fashion? Is there a worthy old Baptist who knew him in the old days to whom he ever turned the cold shoulder? We believe not. To receive a kindness from him was to get double value, through the heartiness with which his gift was bestowed. He never, like some men, made you feel "ashamed to beg" for a good cause, but rather proud of your happy success. He was like Bunyan's "Great Heart" to many, many pilgrims.

Our late friend's Church life was simple and unostentatious. Although nearly all his Christian life a deacon and leading helper, he loved to take his place with the humblest and the meekest in the house of God. The gaieties of "society" had no attractions for him; his business, his home, his church, his denomination were his world. Stars of more or less magnitude might come and preach elsewhere, but the family from Wootton Lea were rarely absent from their own church; and when at Glen Osmond there was no pastor for some time, and not the ablest of lay talent available for the pulpit, there was a patient hearing of the elementry, and sometimes very crude deliverances of the preachers. This is the kind of merchant-prince who does not make his appearance among the Baptists every day.

To the bereaved members of the family we tender our deep sympathy and Christian affection. Mrs. Fowler has

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been a noble and likeminded Christian with her husband; her sons and daughters honour the family name, and will, we know, be conscious in this sad hour of a Divine presence with them, and of a revealed Love which will enfold and sustain. A singlularly beautiful family life, where the tenderest and deepest affections have abounded, will be perfected we are assured, in the House of many mansions. So will pray all our readers who know these valued friends as we do ourselves.

*The Baptist Magazine*, LONDON, FEBRUARY, 1897.

# THE LATE MR. G. S. FOWLER.

GEORGE SWAN FOWLER, of London and Adelaide was the bearer of a revered and honoured name to which he has added new lustre. He had the inestimable advantage of coming of a good stock. His father—Mr. James Fowler, of Cellardyke, Anstruther—was one of the most successful merchants in the East of Fife—a man of keen intelligence, unwearied energy, and inflexible perseverance, public-spirited withal, and interested in all that concerned the progress of the town. For many years he acted as pastor of the little Baptist church which met, first of all, in the Tabernacle erected under the influence of "The Haldane Revival," and subsequently, after sundry reverses, in the more commodious chapel in the East Green. To his pastoral duties Mr. Fowler devoted, even when engaged in business, no small amount of his time, writing his sermons with great care, and maintaining a strict oversight of the congregation. He had a naturally keen interest in theological questions, and could best be described as a disciple of Andrew Fuller,

whose principal works he must almost have known by heart. He had also made a close study of the works of Dr. Chalmers, the most renowned of Anstruther worthies, and of the Biblical expositions of the late Dr. John Brown. When Mr. Fowler was convinced that the system under which the church had existed was no longer adapted to the needs of the congregation, no one more readily welcomed a change. The church was reconstituted under the ministry of the Rev. J. C. Brown, now of Edinburgh, a new chapel was built, and Mr. Fowler became senior deacon. For my own part, I shall ever cherish his memory with deep affection. My relations with him during a pastorate of over six years were of the most friendly kind. How much I owe to the wise guidance, the generous forbearance, the ready co-operation and helpfulness of one who was to me even as a father to a son, it is impossible to say. Mrs. Fowler had one of the gentlest and most beautiful spirits that ever tenanted a human frame. For many years before her death she was a great sufferer, and during the time of my pastorate was present only at one or two services in the chapel, and then as a result of an effort which should scarcely have been made. Her thoughtfulness and consideration for others, her practical sympathy with the poor and suffering, her deep, unaffected piety, made converse with her a delight, and to this day I often recall the hallowed scenes which preceded her death. Nor would any mention of this home be complete without a reference to the Misses

Fowler—three Christian ladies whose unselfish disposition, vigorous common sense, and unwearied activity in good works, made them invaluable "servants of the church" and "succourers of many."

It was in the atmosphere of such a home that G. S. Fowler was born in 1839, and lived until 1860. He was baptized in the spring of that year, and a few months afterwards went out to Adelaide to join his brother, Mr. David Fowler, in the business which he and another brother, who had been "early called to bliss," had established there. This business, begun on a modest scale, has grown into one of the largest and most flourishing of colonial enterprises. The little unpretentious store seems out of all proportion to the fine pile of buildings facing the New Dock, in Port Adelaide, where there is storage room for 30,000 tons of goods, to say nothing of the branches at Fremantle and Broken Hill, the Lion Confectionery Works, the shipping agencies, and the Adelaide Milling Company. In business operations of this extensive scale many heads, as well as many hands, are needed, and it was no uncommon thing for Mr. Fowler to refer to his indebtedness to the brothers whom he had lost, to his partners, and his sons. But from 1881, at any rate, the year in which his brother David died, he was, in every sense, the guiding spirit. As a business man he was shrewd and far-seeing, accurate in provision, sound in judgement, and full of splendid daring, his boldness, however, being always tempered with caution.

More than most men he knew how to "take occasion by the hand," and strikingly illustrated what is to "buy up the opportunity." This accounts very largely for his exceptional success. He had, as the *South Australian Register* testified, "an enormous power for work, a genius for organization, and a wonderful mastery of detail. Under his direction everything was done systematically . . . . To exceptional shrewdness and alertness of apprehension and action, Mr. Fowler joined an uncompromising regard for the highest principles of honour." He always seemed to me the very soul of honour, and "in Adelaide to-day the name of Fowler is the synonym for mercantile rectitude."

A man of Mr. Fowler's temperament and energy could not escape the responsibilities and honours of public life. He shirked neither social nor civic duties. He was for three years chairman of the East Torrens School Board. For several years he represented East Adelaide in the South Australian House of Assembly, and was for a short time Treasurer in the Ministry of Sir William Morgan, winning a high reputation in connection with the Exchequer. In accepting his resignation, which he was constrained to tender in consequence of ill-health in 1881, the spokesman of the Government stated that his colleagues in the Cabinet "had all been impressed with the clearness of his views on financial matters, and greatly regretted his resignation." Had he cared to devote himself more fully to politics, he could easily have

reached a still higher post. In 1892, he was nominated as a candidate to represent his old constituency, but was defeated by the unwise and suicidal policy of the Labour party. He was not a man to truckle for votes. He scorned the arts of the trimner, and refused to worship at the shrine of expediency.

Mr. Fowler was never ashamed of his Baptist principles, and had no sympathy with the spirit which leads men to abandon them for the sake of respectability and fashion. I have been with him in small towns and villages where he could easily have ignored the Baptist chapel, and "gone to church." But he had no desire to do so. In one case the chapel was in a side street, difficult of access, and by no means comfortable to worship in, but he preferred to be there amongst his own people. I remember another case in which a little Baptist church, at a fashionable watering-place in Scotland, had to contend with peculiar difficulties, and he thought it would be a good thing if, during the summer season, a public hall could be hired for services, and a number of his ministerial friends be induced to conduct them. He was greatly disappointed that the project could not be carried out. I saw a striking confirmation of the above statements in one of the instances to which I have referred. There were in the town at the time several preachers of high reputation—men who attract immense congregations wherever they go—but it was a matter of course that we should go to "our own service." Yet with all this staunchness Mr. Fowler

was no bigot. His charity embraced all who love our Lord Jesus Christ, and he had intimate friends among the ministers and members of every section of the Church.

My acquaintance with Mr. Fowler began in 1864, on the day before my "induction service" at Anstruther. I last saw him on the evening before he sailed for Adelaide, after his last visit to England, in June, 1895. What happy days we had together in Fifeshire—rambles on the braes, pic-nics at the East Neuk, and drives to St. Andrews. Equally pleasant was our association when, during a three years' visit to England (1881-1884), he spent some thirteen or fourteen months of that time with Mrs. Fowler and his family in the immediate neighbourhood of Watford. If it was to him a delight to find that the could settle near his father's old minister, it was to that minister an equally great delight to have near him the son of his old deacon. He and his family were rarely absent from the services on the Lord's-day, and rarely did a week pass in which we were not asked to join our friends in a drive to some place of interest amid our beautiful Hertfordshire scenery. During Mr. and Mrs. Fowler's last visit to England we spent the first week of our summer holiday with them at Crieff, where they were to remain for three months. What pains they took, in a quiet, unostentatious way, to make our stay a means of rest and recreation! The weather was perfect, and our drives to the Sma' Glen,

Glen Almond, Comrie and Loch Earn are among our most fondly cherished memories. It was the summer in which "Ian Maclaren's" idylls of Drumtochty were appearing in the *British Weekly*, and this gave an additional charm, which has since been greatly deepened, to the whole district. I happened to know even then who the author was, and though Mr. Fowler had not that summer much time for reading, he was deeply interested in these delightful pictures of the simple faith, the earnest piety, and the pawky humour of the dwellers in the glen. In the autumn of the same year we frequently met in London in connection with the selection of an assistant to the Rev. Silas Mead in the church at Flinders Street, the church having requested Dr. Maclaren, Dr. Clifford, Mr. Meyer, and myself, in conjunction with Mr. Fowler and Mr. John Darling, jun. (of Adelaide), to make the selection. We were fortunate in having had suggested to us the name of the Rev. J. G. Raws, then of Harrogate, who from considerations of health was anxious to remove to a milder climate. Mr. Fowler's tact and judgement were admirable. His inquiries were as kind and sympathetic as they were thorough, and though it was at first intended to select a student from one of our colleges, he saw at once the force of the reasons which had led us to suggest Mr. Raws, and by telegraphic communication with Adelaide secured the consent of the friends there. In the following spring Mr. and Mrs. Fowler again took up their quarters in the neighbourhood of Watford, and we saw a good

deal of them. On Whit Monday we had what proved to be our last drive together. It was about the time Mr. Fowler had heard that the Adelaide Milling Company was in the market, and that it could be purchased for an amount he named. It had not previously been a success. He was convinced that he could make it so. I ventured gently to hint that in the then state of his health, and with the heavy responsibilities which already rested on him, it might not be wise for him to add to his cares. He frankly gave me his reasons for doing so, and I am convinced that he took the matter up not only as a personal, but as a public duty. "He knew," as one of his Australian friends testifies, "that he possessed a faculty for making money, and *that* to him was a gift of his Heavenly Father's, to be used for His Glory." It was because of this that Mr. Fowler gained the esteem and affection of all with whom he was associated. To his *employés* he was first of all just, and then generous. They, therefore, trusted and loved him, and were proud of him; and I question whether he valued anything more than the evidence he received of this when they presented him with his portrait in oil on the occasion of his fiftieth birthday, his partners making him a handsome presentation at the same time.

Mr. Fowler looked so weary and exhausted the night before he sailed for Adelaide that, while I felt anxious about him, I was glad that he had the prospect of a voyage. He never regained all his old vigour, though his

mind was as active and his spirit as buoyant as ever. His last public, or semi-public, act was to address the ministers of the South Australian Baptist Union in his son's (Mr. J. R. Fowler's) drawing room, a fortnight before his death, which occurred on October 1st last. He was scarcely equal to the effort. "The words came slowly, and the utterance was feeble; but, for pathos, tenderness, and winsome persuasiveness, it stands unequalled in the memories of some of us. It was a beautiful instance of the sustained efficiency of the mental and spiritual nature, while the mortal tabernacle was crumbling into ruins."

Some three months before his death Mr. Fowler sent to his sister (now in Edinburgh) a full account of various denominational matters in South Australia, with a request that she would forward it to me. It was another instance of his kindly consideration; while the letter itself proved how wise, how generous and large-hearted he was in his denominational loyalty. A letter from Mr. Raws, which reached me on September 28th, contained clear indications that the end was near; and I was thus prepared for the intimation which reached me a few days later.

It would not be fitting to close this inadequate sketch of an exceptionally gifted and useful life without some reference, however brief, to the genial and large-hearted lady who made Mr. Fowler's home a "Palace Beautiful," and stimulated all that was high and noble in his nature;

and to the sons and daughters, who in their various ways, honour the family name.

JAMES STUART.

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